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**THE PARADOX OF POLITICAL ISLAM:
UNITY AND DIVERSITY
IN THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST**

by

William J. Carr

March 1996

Thesis Co-Advisors:

Glenn E. Robinson
Peter R. Lavoy

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UNITY AND DIVERSITY
IN THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST**

William J. Carr
Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy
B.S., U. S. Naval Academy, 1986

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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

March 1996

Author:



William J. Carr

Approved by:



Glenn E. Robinson, Thesis Co-Advisor



Peter R. Lavoy, Thesis Co-Advisor



Frank M. Teti, Chairman

Department of National Security Affairs

ABSTRACT

With the worldwide political changes brought about by the end of the Cold War, political Islam has gained new significance as a potential threat to U.S. interests. Assessments of the phenomenon have varied, ranging from an Islamic replacement for the communist global ideological menace to a more legitimate expression of social and political activism within Muslim countries. The United States does not have a coherent, long-term policy toward this resurgent ideological force. An objective assessment of political Islam must be developed to enable policy-makers to understand the true nature and aspirations of the Islamists, and to craft appropriate responses. This thesis argues that political Islam is not a monolithic "Green Menace"; while pervasive, and influenced by unifying aspects of a common Third World "crisis" environment and the "fundamentals" of the Islamic faith, it is paradoxically a diverse grouping of ideologies that is polycentric in character. These ideologies vary in specific origins and means of sociopolitical action, while emphasizing a political focus aimed primarily at the local, intrastate levels. Given the phenomenon's multifaceted nature, the U.S. must develop a similar diversity in its policy approaches.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism has been depicted as a potential new global ideological menace poised to fill the "threat vacuum" left by communism's collapse. Islam currently claims more than one billion adherents worldwide, and a Muslim majority exists in almost fifty countries across a geographic area extending from the West coast of Africa to Southeast Asia; the sheer size and latent transnational power of Islam combine with lingering cultural stereotypes and past anti-Western extremist activities to raise the specter of a threatening, monolithic force of violence and fanaticism. Many analysts and political pundits currently see Islamic fundamentalists as *the* major threat to stability, not only in the region of the Middle East, but throughout the broader Muslim World. At the same time, other sources provide a less threatening perspective, pointing to positive aspects within the Islamic faith that correspond with Western notions of social justice and democracy. Terrorists and fanatics are placed on the far radical fringe of a much larger majority of Muslims who want to have good relations with the U.S. and the European countries, and welcome the opportunity to benefit from trade and general good relations. The dichotomy presented by such diverse reporting begs the questions: What is the true nature of Islamic fundamentalism? Just how powerful a phenomenon is it? What is the threat it represents?

With what is described as a historical anti-Western world view, Islamic fundamentalism, or more appropriately *political Islam*, has been portrayed as a product of a timeless religious faith and an associated backward-looking culture and, as such, forms the basis for a looming "civilization-level" conflict with the West. In contrast, this thesis focuses on the paradoxical aspects presented by the phenomenon's *diversity*—by showing how political Islam, though seemingly "unified" on religious grounds, is not some monolithic "Green Menace" set to sweep across the Greater Middle East region, but is instead a disparate, polycentric grouping of political ideologies that develop primarily as a response to specific political, economic and social conditions within individual Muslim countries. Due to differences in a series of dialectical relationships inherent within the

phenomenon, the power of political Islam varies with time and place, and must be assessed within specific local contexts of the “transitional” states of the region to gain more meaningful insight.

Since similar conditions can also be identified within non-Muslim developing countries in a broader contemporary context, political Islam must be understood as but one version of a “common response” to Third World “crisis” conditions brought on by the trials of modernization/secularization and development. Political Islam *does* draw upon common Islamic religious ideas and symbology to provide both an alternate vision of reality and a basis for political action for Muslims engulfed in an atmosphere of “crisis” that currently engulfs many of their countries. However, objective analysis indicates that “Islamic” themes and ideas should not obscure the root causes of unrest and popular interest in these alternative ideologies within regional states. Moreover, the majority of Islamists recognize the borders and most institutions of contemporary nation-states—and most actually “work within the bounds” of the state in efforts promoting Islamic political thought and reform. Thus, rather than a “wave” of fundamentalism surging forth and engulfing regimes one-by-one across the Muslim world, danger from Islamists is principally an *intrastate* challenge to incumbent regimes—with interstate terrorism as a minor exception—arising from various localized, yet multifaceted, environmental contexts. Therefore, analysis of—and guarding against potential threats to U.S. interests from—political Islam must be addressed in a correspondingly differentiated manner across the Greater Middle East region.

U.S. policy makers must overcome the stereotypes identified with Islam and the ingrained “truths” associated with Western notions of modernization and development. Islam, like any great religion is a “lived” experience which incorporates various aspects of its local environment—especially when it assumes the character of a political ideology as is the case with political Islam. Modernization theorists have been perplexed by the political revitalization of religious groups across the globe—not just in the Greater Middle East—which directly contradicts the Western notions of modernization and secularization proceeding hand-in-hand. Thus, a more specialized means of interpreting the true

nature(s) of political Islam—accounting for its unifying aspects as well as the localized diversity of the various regional ideologies it incorporates—is required to permit an objective assessment and allow policy makers to gain appropriate implications from such a survey of the phenomenon.

I. INTRODUCTION

With the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism has been depicted as a potential new global ideological menace poised to fill the "threat vacuum" left by communism's collapse. Islam currently claims more than one billion adherents worldwide, and a Muslim majority exists in almost fifty countries across a geographic area extending from the West coast of Africa to Southeast Asia; the sheer size and latent transnational power of the religion combine with lingering cultural stereotypes and past anti-Western extremist activities to raise the specter of a threatening, monolithic force of violence and fanaticism. Many analysts and political pundits currently see Islamic fundamentalists as the major threat to stability, not only in the region of the Middle East, but throughout the broader Muslim World. They indicate such fears in characterizations found in articles with headlines such as: "The Roots of Muslim Rage" (Lewis, 1990), "The Sword of Islam" (*Boston Globe*, 1991), etc., and in works warning of coming Holy Wars such as "The New Crescent of Crisis: Global Intifada" (Krauthammer, 1990), or "America v Islam" (*The Economist*, July 3, 1993), or even "The Clash of Civilizations" (Huntington, 1993; also Lewis, 1990). At the same time, other sources provide a less threatening perspective, pointing to positive aspects within the Islamic faith that correspond with Western notions of social justice and democracy. Terrorists and fanatics are placed on the far radical fringe of a much larger majority of Muslims who want to have good relations with the U.S. and the European countries, and welcome the opportunity to benefit from trade and general good relations. The dichotomy presented by such diverse reporting begs the questions: What is the true nature of Islamic fundamentalism? Just how powerful a phenomenon is it? What is the threat it represents?

With what is described as a historical anti-Western world view, Islamic fundamentalism, or more appropriately *political Islam*, has been portrayed as a product of a timeless religious faith and an associated backward-looking culture and, as such, forms the basis for

a looming “civilization-level” conflict with the West. In contrast, this thesis will focus on the paradoxical aspects presented by the phenomenon’s diversity—by showing how political Islam, though seemingly “unified” on religious grounds, is not some monolithic “Green Me-nace” set to sweep across the Greater Middle East region, but is instead a disparate, poly-centric grouping of political ideologies that develop primarily as a response to specific political, economic and social conditions within individual Muslim countries. Through a series of dialectical relationships inherent within the phenomenon, it can be shown that the power of political Islam will vary with time and place, and must be assessed within specific local contexts of the “transitional” states of the region to gain more meaningful insight.

Since similar conditions can also be identified within non-Muslim developing countries in a broader contemporary context, political Islam must be understood as but one version of a “common response” to Third World “crisis” conditions brought on by the trials of modernization/secularization and development. Political Islam *does* draw upon common Islamic religious ideas and symbology to provide both an alternate vision of reality and a basis for political action for Muslims engulfed in an atmosphere of “crisis” that currently engulfs many of their countries. However, objective analysis will indicate that “Islamic” themes and ideas should not obscure the root causes of unrest and interest in these alternative ideologies within regional states. Moreover, it will be shown that the majority of Islamists recognize the borders and most institutions of contemporary nation-states—and most actually “work within the bounds” of the state in efforts promoting Islamic political thought and reform. Thus, rather than a “wave” of fundamentalism surging forth and engulfing regimes one-by-one across the Muslim world, danger from Islamists is principally an *intrastate* challenge—with interstate terrorism as a minor exception—arising from various localized, yet multifaceted, environmental contexts. Therefore, analysis of—and guarding against potential threats to U.S. interests from—political Islam must be addressed in a correspondingly differentiated manner across the Greater Middle East region.

A. POLITICAL ISLAM: AN IDEOLOGY IN CONTEXT

In investigating political Islam's true nature, this analysis will contradict typical excessively negative perceptions of the phenomenon—apprehensive commentaries heavily burdened by historical baggage and rigid, stereotyped idiosyncrasies—which fail to capture its actual heterogeneous and modern “essences.” Though seemingly “logically” derived from misinformed analysis of unique cultural differences and core Islamic religious beliefs, much of the contemporary discussion fails to maintain objectivity—actually oversimplifying issues involved, while implying a “threatening” unity among Muslim countries and disparate Islamist movements not evident in reality. Moreover, the effect of “Orientalist” thought patterns and over-emphasis on the requirement for secularization to accompany modernization created a view that most Muslim political activists favor a militant strategy that is both anti-Western and anti-modern. Simplistic attempts to link Islamic “fundamentalism” to Western analogies lead to pictures of a monolithic religious entity aimed at “returning” to the seventh century A.D. in Arabia and the perfect Islamic society.

Later in this study, those fundamental aspects of religion and culture relating to politics shared between the people, states and Islamist movements of the Greater Middle East will be examined briefly, in order to aid in comprehension of political Islam as a whole. Islam, like any great religion, is full of powerful *symbols* and historical qualities providing a highly fertile basis for propagating ideologies of mass mobilization in *opposition* to—and in support of— government policies. However, a survey of historical attributes must not obscure the genuine sources of contemporary religio-political activism throughout the Muslim world. In fact, political Islam is a modern phenomenon, one with metaphorical ties to Islam's past but origins in the contemporary atmosphere of the developing world. As Bruce Lawrence indicates:

Islamic fundamentalism . . . arose in the modern era. Like every other aspect of Muslim life, it was shaped by the overwhelming and new character of secularization [brought on by Western-inspired modernization], much of which permeated only the elite classes of Muslim countries, but permanently

shaped all residents of the Muslim/Arab world through the emergence of such new institutions as communications, health care, education, and, above all, nationalism. (Lawrence, 1987, p. 29)

Thus, a review of key aspects of modernization and development, and the resultant discontinuities of social change in transitional states—as provided in Chapter II—forms the basis for distinguishing the common characteristics of political Islam. Expanding on this foundation, Chapter III will present important widespread similarities between “causes” and “effects” generated by modernization and development efforts sparking the rise of various Islamist “responses”; in other words, it will show commonalities arising from the *deterioration* of a range of political, economic and social factors, generating a *crisis milieu* characteristic of the collective *Third World* that ignites popular religio-political movements across the region.

Paul Salem (1994, p. 2) describes the period under study, roughly the years since World War I, as an “age of ideology” in the region—brought on by “the breakdown of traditional social and cultural systems.” Such a concept will aid in this analysis, as political Islam can be shown as an *ideology in context*, responding to the particular environment around it—and also as simply the latest in a successive line of ideologies that have arisen in a somewhat rhythmic pattern over that time. Most important, the “competition” between ideologies is significant, because it helped to frame the field of political debate—forming a unique blend of Western and Islamic elements:

Nationalism . . . was adopted by many Muslim elites as a strategy for coping with the otherwise intractable authority of colonial governments, economies, and armies. What emerged with nationalism in nearly every country was the state as an obedience context, with the kind of Islam advocated by the government enforced on the majority as a symbol of political loyalty as well as religious orthodoxy. Fundamentalism then began as a dissident movement against both foreign power and foreign ideas perpetuated by indigenous elites. Yet it took cognizance of the power of both. . . . precisely because [the Fundamentalists] recognized the strength of the enemy, they did not hesitate

to use Western writings, Western means of communications, and aspects of Western ideologies to achieve their own ends. (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 29-30)

Since political Islam is but one category among several ideological responses to the cluster of common Third World "crisis" conditions, closely surveying both aspects—the history of recent political developments and ideologies, as well as the current "crisis" milieu—at various levels-of-analysis is important. A key consideration will be to explain how the Islamists can generally take advantage of inherent *opportunities* presented by the prevailing atmosphere in order to pursue their own unique political agendas. They have an appealingly simple message of "Islam is the answer," promoting an ideology authentic to the culture, untarnished by Western origins or perceived failed implementation in the past, and responsive to the needs of those elements within transitional societies most influenced by the "crisis" environment.

However, bonds of commonality among both the "symptoms" of discontinuous social change, and standard Islamist symbology and "responses," should not be perceived as innately stronger than the disparate centrifugal forces and unique historical experiences also influencing Islamist movements and their answers to crises in the national environment. In fact, paradoxically, the "Islamic world" is quite diverse and political Islam reflects these conditions through a variety of unique manifestations and relationships to political power—to be examined in Chapter IV. The phenomenon of political Islam encompasses a range of different actors and ideologies, and these disparate so-called "fundamentalisms" within the Greater Middle East can be directly related to individual interpretations of Islamic precepts as well as to particular local historical contexts and conditions. Often the Islamists are seen as competitors against both the government and traditional religious leaders, and also as competitors against an onslaught of harmful "Western" influences within their societies. Variations in ideology and methods among key actors espousing "Islamic" politics are detailed within a typology of Islamic "revivalists"—essentially differentiating between various actors, viewpoints, and interests involved in the broader Islamic resurgence—to aid

in understanding requisite distinctions of the following analysis. Contrasts in terms of geography, politics, levels of development and other socio-cultural attributes also combine to generate a variety of ideologies and political relationships—creating a *polycentric* character for the overall phenomenon.

Chapter IV will also provide specific examples of this diversity through a series of case studies—from three separate “categories” arranged according to the general relationship between political Islam and political power within their state environment—for comparison and contrast: 1) *Islamists Gain Power: The Unique Case of Iran*—reviewing first the triumphant struggle of the radical Shi’i ideology of Khomeini over first the Shah, and over numerous competitors in the period of consolidation after the Revolution, followed by the history of continued ideological factionalism that has characterized the Islamic Republic up to the present; 2) *Political Islam “At War”: The Case of Egypt*—a case study of the current bitter conflict between the Mubarak government and Egyptian Islamists—a situation often feared as the next potential “Iran”; and 3) *Coopted Political Islam: The Case Of Pakistan*—a survey of the activities of Pakistani Islamists and their interact with a range of governments over the history of that country—which has the unique status of being the first and only state “founded” on Islam. Finally, the chapter concludes with analysis of a critical issue involving the broader phenomenon, when points relating to the mythical notion of a monolithic Pan-Islam movement will be developed. These final remarks will attempt to place the currently exaggerated threat of a transnational “Green Menace” in proper perspective.

Finally, based upon information provided, some general conclusions on the nature of the phenomenon and the most-likely threats to be expected from political Islam in the future are furnished in Chapter V. Given the polycentric character and primarily “local” orientation of the Islamist movements, it is problematic to give a specific answer to region-wide questions of power or threats from Islamism—it must be viewed in a more localized context that takes into account factors from its broader environment, and not vice versa. A series of “multifaceted dialectical relationships” (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 19) that are intrinsic to the phenomenon will be developed from the study’s information; by focusing analysis on

these correlations and then applying them individual states/situations, a more valuable perspective of the phenomenon, including its “transnational” aspects, will be gained. At this local/state level, the surge of an Islamic “wave” across borders is an unlikely possibility; the principal threats are perceived as *internal violence* and unrest within regional countries—and, unfortunately, ever-present acts of terrorism. Of the two, the intrastate dimension is the most significant long-term problem—it will be aimed against authoritarian and traditional regimes that have failed to properly balance various aspects of their attempts to modernize society. The likelihood of violence is especially high where regimes suffer from ineffective efforts to offset the concurrent political and social upheavals which typically ensue. As an opposition ideology, individuals often see political Islam as their *sole remaining means* available to respond to the national “crisis” milieu, which has hampered their ability to cope and thus far thwarted the reaction of most transitional states. However, since a response is contingent upon the local context, the particular environment and individual actors involved will differentiate the manner in which Islamic ideology is utilized. With this understanding—and a realization of the profound changes to the security environment in the aftermath of the Cold War—some *implications* for United States policy and interests are provided to conclude this analysis.

B. A TAXONOMY OF ‘ISLAMICITY’

In most discussions of fundamentalist Islam, the lack of a clear distinction between religion and politics provides the justification for attacks on Islam’s rigid and anti-scientific orthodoxy, and traditional influences, that supposedly make it unsuitable as the basis for a “modern” political system (which by definition would exclude religion as a primary component—see Chapter II). Within Muslim countries, Islam has historically been closely linked—much like Christianity was until quite recently—to government and politics, thus providing an aura of timelessness to contemporary calls for religious rule. However, far from being a limited or strictly rigid ideological foundation, Islam and its related symbology have paradoxically been a tool of legitimization—both over time and throughout the Muslim

world—for a broad spectrum of governments, as well as a powerful vehicle of dissent for their various opponents. This unique situation, where diversity originates from a source of apparent unity, will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter IV.

Nevertheless, when trying to outline a generally accepted relationship between Islam and politics, and distinguish between the disparate elements encompassed by the phenomenon of political Islam and the broader Islamic revival, there is overwhelming evidence that, as Nazih Ayubi maintains, “there is no single formula that is recommended by all scholars and believers.” Given this incongruous situation, it is helpful to review “the three main areas” that he notes where such opinions on politics among Muslim activists differ:

1. **In terms of the scope of political activity.** A sizeable group believes in the complete and holistic nature of revealed Islam so that . . . it encompasses the three famous ‘Ds’ (*din*, religion; *dunya*, life and *dawla*, State). . . . others, however, including some religious scholars, . . . believe that modern politics and economics are more of a civil domain for the ordinary citizen to ponder and improvise upon, in which [their] belief . . . [is] very close to what in Western terminology would be called separation between Church and State.
2. **In terms of degree of political control and participation.** There are some who believe that Islamic government is not about participation, and that the Muslim ruler is not obliged to take into consideration the advice and opinion given to him by others. . . . There are [others] believe . . . that the Islamic principle of *shura* is exactly equivalent to the term ‘democracy’ in its modern connotations.
3. **In terms of type of socioeconomic system and scope of State intervention in the economy.** Here there are those who, in emphasizing Islam's condoning of private ownership, end up by justifying the status quo, the class system . . . and a capitalist-type economy. . . . There are also those [with] a leftist perspective . . . who maintain that ‘true Islam is . . . progressive and revolutionary, and has always fought against oppression.’ (Ayubi, 1991, pp. 60-65, **emphasis added**)

Of note, polarized “opinions” identified in each area are actually positions within a broad spectrum of interpretations and political practices evident throughout the Muslim world.

Ayubi also recognizes another key aspect of the debate—the modern identity of Islamist groups—in stating “It should be emphasized [that] . . . the concept of the ‘Islamic’ state as such is very new, and can be regarded as an alternative to the concept of the defunct caliphate [the successors of the Prophet Muhammad] (Ayubi, 1991, p. 64) This condition serves to underscore an important consideration of the nature of ideologies, namely that conditions of the time and place are a critical consideration when making comparisons or distinctions. The circumstances under which individuals or groups develop or support specific beliefs or interpretations of Islamic theology must be examined closely in any analysis of Islamists and related activity.

In dealing with these various “Islams” occurring within the all-encompassing Islamic revival, Ayubi groups Muslims in terms of categories of “Islamicity” for ease of discussion; such a means of facilitation will assist in this analysis as well. First, he introduces a simple category of *Muslim*, a person simply born to Muslim parents. Next, there is a *mutadayyin* Muslim, an observant believer who fulfills his religious duties and upholds the “credo.” “*Islamic reformers*” or “*Islamic modernists*” are those writers and scholars who, though varying in personal religiosity and specific opinions, believe that the breadth and flexibility of Islamic ideology will allow an accommodation with the changing environment and progression of time. They advocate a reconciliation of traditional Islamic doctrine with scientific rationalism. Next, there are much smaller “intellectual or social groups,” such as the *salafis* who maintain a scripturalist or traditionalist outlook—with the “good example of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions and of the early caliphs and jurists” as their ideal. While many of the *ulama*, or religious scholars, could be grouped in this conservative category, Ayubi primarily distinguishes this as a non-clerical segment for the purposes of discussing political Islam.

Then, he presents the “*fundamentalists*” and “*neo-fundamentalists*,” the Islamic versions of universal religiously-oriented movements focused on a “return to the early sources”; Muslims of this group are “generally less sympathetic” to jurisprudence and maintain a comprehensive, holistic vision of Islam (along the lines of “the three ‘Ds’” mentioned

above) which necessitates collective action of the community to reach fruition. The neo-fundamentalists are typically splinter groups of this nature, but with a more radical or militant bent to their outlook; they will likely be more selective in their promotion of “authoritative sources” and will focus on “immediate” actions—often “outside the bounds” of the state—to achieve their goals. These last two categories usually are the subject of, Western writings or commentaries on “Islamic fundamentalism.” Since these groups will typically fit into the category of being less-than-hospitable to Western notions of democracy, individual and minority rights, and tolerance of political dissent, they are most often regarded as a general threat to Western interests throughout the region. In a more inclusive category, he includes the last three groups (*salafis*, fundamentalists and neo-fundamentalists) into an “*Islamists*” category, namely those that go beyond simple belief and practice, and make a “conscious, determined choice of an Islamic doctrine” as a means of meeting problems of modernization and secularization within their respective countries (i.e., promoting political Islam as a solution). (Ayubi, 1991, pp. 67-68)

C. A QUESTION OF SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE

In order to present a comprehensive illustration and analysis of a phenomenon like political Islam that is transnational in its range—with correspondingly far-reaching potential threats to U.S. interests across the Greater Middle East region—while in turn highlighting the important paradoxes of its localized and individually unique origins, several levels of analysis of the sociopolitical environment must be incorporated. These levels include the Third World in general, the “Muslim” World, the Greater Middle East, the Arab states, and finally specific representative countries within in the broader region. While the majority of this analysis and its conclusions concern the Greater Middle East—and are based upon general historical developments and conditions prevailing throughout that area—it will occasionally focus on subregions (i.e., the Arab world, the Gulf states, etc.) or certain countries in order to provide more specific examples—particularly in the discussion of contrasts within the phenomenon and the case study comparisons of Chapter IV.

Of note, the term "Greater Middle East" is used to identify the geographic region encompassing North Africa, the Levant, the Persian (Arab) Gulf, Central Asia, and South Asia (Binnendijk and Clawson, 1995, p. 67). This "broadened" geographic region has received greater attention from political analysts in the aftermath of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, due to enhanced social, economic and especially cultural links between states in this area. While incorporating states previously included in various other regional groupings—and at the same time excluding many additional countries with Muslim majorities or sizeable subgroups in areas such as India and South-East Asia (Indonesia in fact has the largest Muslim population in the world)—it is a geographic area that will likely exhibit increasing similarities and varying degrees of "cohesiveness" in the future. Thus, the Greater Middle East can be viewed as a more inclusive whole and will serve as an effective reference point for discussions of common issues within the general phenomenon. Again, however, it must be stressed that specific historical and localized aspects of political Islam are the chief determinants of the Islamist response in any given situation or locality.

Finally, some closing thoughts on the "choice" of a broad scope for this study are pertinent at this time. While the various levels of analysis noted above will obviously be distinguished as appropriate in this study, the necessity for their use and the concern for their clarity—as with the terminology presented below—are merely evidence of an acknowledged difficulty in accurately analyzing "the big picture" of such a highly diverse and enigmatic phenomenon. Still, a comprehensive survey of political Islam can provide a tremendous amount of information and insight—while hopefully avoiding the potential of stereotyping of the phenomenon as a whole based upon limited examples from one or two countries or situations. This attempt to develop such an extensive study was undertaken as both a challenge and a much needed effort to increase general understanding—in support of U.S. policy making and to safeguard vital interests throughout the region. This effort is justified by the importance of the subject matter, as political Islam is one of the most significant (and misunderstood) outgrowths of the unsettled political, social, economic, and cultural

environment of the Greater Middle East, and it is likely to remain a factor in regional politics for many years to come.

D. PROBLEMS OF TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

The phenomenon of political Islam—or more popularly mis-labeled Islamic fundamentalism—involves a variety of aspects and a broad range of activities typically described in imprecise terminology, with such ambiguity hindering attempts at evaluation. Since potential problems can arise as a result, clarification of a number of related terms is necessary, providing definitions for basic elements and supporting nomenclature for analysis.

1. Fundamentalism or Revivalism? . . . it is *Political Islam*

Unlike the news media, few Islamic scholars ardently promote the term *fundamentalism*, with its specific historical linkage to American Protestantism, as a description for the phenomenon encompassing numerous complex religiously-oriented sociopolitical movements that have increased their activities throughout the Islamic world. It has often been stated that the label “*fundamentalist*” is a misnomer, as any true Muslim believes the Quran to be the actual word of God—and thus all Muslims must be fundamentalists in the sense that they adhere to the dictates of the faith it provides. More important, the pejorative nature of the term leads to image of religious activists who can be “regarded as static, retrogressive, and extremist. As a result, fundamentalism often has been regarded popularly as referring to those who are literalists and wish to return to and replicate the past. [It also] is often equated with political activism, extremism, fanaticism, terrorism, and anti-Americanism.” (Esposito, 1992, p. 7) In an attempt to avoid these stereotypes and misperceptions, a variety of labels—such as Islamic revivalism, the ‘Islamic Resurgence,’ political Islam, and militant or radical Islam—have been used instead when addressing this phenomenon. As will be shown, no one term totally avoids ambiguity, particularly when discussing various subgroups, which happen to include fundamentalist activists. However, some clarity can be provided on the nature and relevant aspects of the general phenomenon

in question, to further distinguish it from related considerations in the Greater Middle East environment.

Throughout the vast reaches of the Muslim world, there are numerous indications of a general “*revival*” of the Islamic faith, a “reawakening of interest in Islamic symbols, ideas, and ideals. . . . [and a] reemergence of Islam as a sociopolitical force in the world” (Husain, 1995, p. 4). In Muslim personal life, this reawakening can be seen in increased attendance at mosques, greater regard for rituals such as prayer, fasting and other religious observances, the increased religious content of publications and media programming, and more pronounced attention to Islamic values and norms of dress and social interaction. While this type of “revival” is certainly within the general context of the phenomenon under analysis, political Islam is encompassed by (and then must be distinguished from) more public aspects of the revival. These features include the proliferation of institutions and organizations labeled as “Islamic,” such as banks, social welfare and educational organizations, legal codes and government systems, and a variety of political opposition groups. In a more politically-oriented manner than most, Mir Zohair Husain develops the concept in this manner:

Manifestations of the Islamic revival include (a) a groundswell or resurgence—involving a broad spectrum of the Muslim society—of public sentiment for and interest in an Islamic system . . . referred to as both an Islamic resurgence and as “Populist Islam”; (b) grass roots or populist Islamic movements (also referred to as “Populist Islam”), involving selected segments of Muslim society—for example, members of the working class or those of the student community—who want to establish an Islamic system; and © government-sponsored Islamic programs that reassert religion as a primary ideological force (referred to variously as “Governmental Islam” or “Official Islam”). In the latter programs the leadership in power may be resorting to Islam for any number of reasons, including sincere religious beliefs, appeasement of an influential domestic religious group, enhancement of governmental legitimacy, assistance in the integration of a fragmented society, and acquisition of funds from rich Muslim countries. (Husain, 1995, p. 4)

While public features of Islamic 'revivalism' are closer to the issues of concern, this term still lacks clarity and focus on the appropriate subject. While also favoring the expression, John Esposito, Director of the Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding at Georgetown, denotes the "deceptive" nature of the word, due to the implication "that Islam had somehow disappeared or been absent from the Muslim world. It is more correct to view Islamic revivalism as having led to a higher profile of Islam in Muslim politics and society." (Esposito, 1992, p. 11) Again the broader environment is the focus here, when more specificity—aimed at the crux of a religio-political phenomenon—is the desired emphasis of this study.

In seeking an alternative, Ali E. Hillal Dessouki uses the term Islamic '*resurgence*'—with an even more appropriate political connotation in his definition. In developing the concept, he alludes to:

. . . increasing political activism in the name of Islam by governments and opposition groups alike. . . . Islamic groups have assumed a more assertive posture and projected themselves in many Arab and Islamic countries as contenders for public allegiance and political loyalty. . . . Thus, Islamic resurgence refers to the increasing prominence and politicization of Islamic ideologies and symbols in Muslim societies and in the public life of Muslim individuals. (Dessouki, 1982, p. 4)

While his definition is more suitable than others, the term '*resurgence*' itself lacks the precise meaning required to simplify and streamline discussion—without his focus on politics and ideology, the term could pertain to other, less-significant aspects of the phenomenon.

Since the general framework of an Islamist "new order" is comprehensive—as discussed in Chapters III and IV—it pertains not only to common social, cultural and moral aspects of a return to fundamentals of the faith, but specifically applies determining religious doctrines and principles to the *political* realm as well. Since terms such as "Islamic fundamentalism" or "Islamic revivalism" are less-than-specific, this analysis will use the expression *political Islam*—or *Islamism* as it is also called—to focus on the specific phenomenon

in question, in order to avoid some of the misconceptions and shortcomings which accompany the former commonly misused terms. Political Islam has a basic goal of implementing Islamic law and establishing an Islamic state, which in turn facilitates development of a just Islamic society and safeguards its political, cultural and religious integrity within the international order.

Thus, Islamism can be distinguished from the more general pattern of revivalism—which in this analysis refers more to a renewed emphasis on Islam *as a religion* within Muslim personal and public life (i.e., sociomoral reform)—by the inherently *political* features of Islamist ideologies, and their basic goals of implementing Islamic law and establishing an Islamic state. While obviously related to the broader, concurrent Islamic revival that has aroused the Muslim world over the last several decades, this distinction is crucial to understanding Islamism, because it must be viewed separately to concentrate on the crucial “subset” of problems and activities involved in order to derive appropriate implications. (Marty and Appleby, 1991, pp. xii-xv) Moreover, in terms of the primary focus of this thesis, political Islam—at the level of a global “phenomenon”—will *still* be shown to comprise a *variety* of related aspects and a range of activities involving both governments and oppositional movements striving to create an alternative order based upon Islamic precepts, laws and doctrine. While there are fundamental theological principles involved in each case, individual differences among Islamist groups are an even more important reason to avoid the monolithic aura of “fundamentalism” or to separate the broader activities of “revivalism,” and refocus on the term political Islam to capture the more essential political considerations involved.

2. Political Islam: Ideology Versus Theology

It is this inherently political nature of the phenomenon that leads to a further required distinction, namely that political Islam must be seen as a *grouping of political ideologies*, and not strictly as theology, to aid in comprehension of its character, origins and strength. While the areas of politics and religious belief are obviously pervasive—and would have at least some interaction and mutual influence in any society—the focus in this analysis will

be on those deliberate efforts to fuse the two and to establish a political system based upon religion. In converting religious belief into political activism, Islamists can be seen as:

. . . activists with scriptural shibboleths. They espouse an ideology but not a theology, and perhaps one of their enduring values is to force others who use a variety of terms in trying to account for the Muslim world to recognize the chasm that separates theology—a handmaid of philosophy that searches for a cohesive integration of all aspects of life—and ideology—a handmaid of power that looks for ways to authenticate those who have been rendered powerless by forces which they can only dimly understand. . . . [they] are exponents of ideology; they are not theologians. (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 31-32)

This distinction not only reaffirms use of the term political Islam, but also sparks the requirement for further examination of the notion of *ideology* to ensure clarity and determine critical elements within the concept.

Because this concept of ideology can be misunderstood and often considered imprecise, two related definitions will provide greater insight into the term's use in this analysis: Paul Salem denotes ideology as "a system of highly integrated ideas, principles, and aims that are related to sociopolitical action." Focusing even more on the crucial political aspects of the concept, Max Skidmore furnishes a similar definition: "Political ideology is a form of thought that presents a pattern of complex political ideas simply and in a manner that inspires action to achieve certain goals." In simultaneously breaking down these definitions and exploring some of the *functions* of the concept, an ideology can be described as "systematic" in that it provides a rational and cohesive "pattern" or *framework for understanding* such factors as the relationship between individuals and society, religion and government, etc., by defining roles and identities for individuals, and answering their basic questions. Its "highly integrated"-nature reduces a "complex sociopolitical reality" through explanation in "a few central beliefs or theories"; by necessity, developing an ideology entails *oversimplification*, which provides Islamists and other Third World ideologues a major source of strength amidst the complex "crisis" environment (discussed in Chapter III) that exists in developing countries. Most important, the final portions of both definitions

stress political considerations, holding that an ideology goes beyond a simple paradigm of beliefs and precepts to provide an *inspirational strategy* for sociopolitical action that seeks to effect change in the current environment. However, this should not be seen as an indication of ideologies as simply vehicles of opposition—though they are powerful ones—as governments and individuals in positions of power can also use ideologies to generate support for the status quo or existing institutions. (Salem, 1994, p. 3; Skidmore, 1993, pp. 7-8)

3. The Concept of Ideology: Distinctions and Dynamics

In expanding upon this last point, Skidmore focuses upon a key point of distinction among ideologies—namely that as a political device, they seek “one of two things: to preserve what exists or to change it.” From this he defines two broad corresponding categories—“*conservative*” or “status quo” ideologies which seek to preserve existing institutions and programs, and “ideologies of *change*.” He further subdivides this second group by *type* of change involved, namely “*reformist*” (those seeking change “essentially within the structure of existing institutions,” often in a more gradual and partial manner) and “*revolutionary*” ideologies (those seeking to overturn these institutions, often with a more violent, ‘all-or-nothing’ bent). (Skidmore, 1993, pp. 7-8) Most important, ideologies exist in one of these particular categories based only upon the relative conditions within which they occur, a factor that provides a key strength to the concept; for example:

. . . [C]onsider the political ideology to which a nation-state adheres, the “official” ideology, as opposed to others . . . also likely to be present. It will always support the institutions of the state, however much it may require rationalization and strained interpretations to do so. It therefore would be conservative. The ideology of a dissenting group would justify change, but if that group were to come to power and develop new institutions, its ideology—even if completely unchanged—would become conservative and justify the status quo. (Skidmore, 1993, p. 8)

Skidmore emphasizes this inherent flexibility as the critical factor behind studying ideologies, by stating:

This ability of an ideology to shift its character depending upon the circumstances, without changing internally, suggests the most important reason for studying the [particular] phenomenon. If an ideology can inspire people to action, and if that action can be directed differently according to circumstances, it follows that those who control the terms of the discussion regarding the ideology can use it to *control and manipulate the people*. (Skidmore, 1993, p. 10; emphasis added)

These distinctions, and contextual influences, are very important considerations when discussing the phenomenon of political Islam. As will be shown, the wide variety of political activists who promote an “Islamic” brand of politics makes it necessary to have a firm grasp on their particular perspective of the socio-political environment and what position they may currently occupy along the “conservative-revolutionary” ideological spectrum—thus indicating the political basis for whatever programs they may promote.

This leads to other important general considerations related to ideologies, including the dynamics involved in the rise and decline of ideologies over time—such as in the “Age of Ideology” in the Greater Middle East. Key common variables, according to Salem, include socioeconomic class, minorities, generations, and crises. The impact of socioeconomic *class* on the growth of ideological political thought extends beyond the Marxist theory of class material interests to include intellectual and psychological biases of specific classes:

... [A] class will generally adopt and promote an ideology that expresses its material interests. . . . The ideology of a class, however, is also partially a politically neutral reflection of [its] educational, cultural, and social background Ideologies become especially active and important at times of class change when a dominated class is toppling a dominating class or when a dominating class is desperately resisting such a challenge. . . . Ideology also serves, however, as a politically neutral means of explaining and understanding reality for classes that are newly formed or . . . moving into new and unfamiliar social environments. Finally, the dialectical opposition between classes applies also to the content of their ideologies. . . . [H]ence, the ideological outlook of any class is largely determined

negatively by the ideology of the class it is struggling against. (Salem, 1994, pp. 21-22)

Based upon this consideration, and the crucial role of previous ideologies in the formation of new replacements, an analysis of the "life cycles" of ideologies within the Greater Middle East is helpful to understand the background of political Islam.

Salem also points to the key role of *minorities* in this development process. As will be shown, religious minorities (including non-Sunni Muslims) had significant impact on the ideologies which preceded political Islam. Arab nationalism or "state-centered" nationalisms "offered [these minorities] a chance of escaping from their position as a minority," by providing an ideological umbrella allowing them to "identify themselves with the majority," according to Albert Hourani (1983, pp. 276-277). More important, these groups—particularly Christians and Jews—were more receptive to European political ideas and principles, and actively promoted ideologies which incorporated such input. (Salem, 1994, pp. 23)

Generational change also has direct relevance to ideology, a factor especially applicable to the youth in transitional societies of the Third World. While Salem's focus is specifically on Arab society, his comments are germane to this study's larger focus. He finds that young members of society are especially open to a new means of confronting the established order:

[Y]oung individuals are almost always in some attitude of rebelliousness toward the dominant order of their parents and society. Entering the adult social and political system on the lowest rung in terms of economic and social power, they are naturally threatened by and hostile to the dominant order. . . . Not surprisingly, then, one finds youth very centrally placed in almost all the ideological movements of the modern Arab world. They support bold challenges to the status quo and are open to ideological formulations of the world and their place in it. . . . they are highly suggestible but have little original ideological preference Above all, they are opposed to the status quo and support almost any serious challenge from below . . . (Salem, 1994, p. 24)

As will be shown, the resulting frustrations of social change are particularly hard on younger members of transitional societies. They are exposed to myriad changes and experience a greater degree of the frustration that permeates society as they search for a proper role in it. Interestingly enough, once accepting the new ideology at this young age, the new generation is “likely to hold roughly to that worldview through its remaining years,” and eschew novel ideologies promoted by new generations or opposing ideologues. The clear implication from this understanding is that the current adherents to an Islamist strategy of change are likely to remain a critical feature of the region’s ideological future. (Salem, 1994, pp. 24-28)

However, the most important concern—in terms of the potential threat from political Islam—of this element of tension between young society members and the established order is that the success of an ideology’s acceptance within this group is often determined more by what it is *against* than what it is for. (Salem, 1994, p. 26) As an ideology of opposition, political Islam has tremendous potential to attract and mobilize the youth against the dominant order. However, in seeking an alternative to the status quo, the formation of new ideologies:

... need not be pendular or cyclical in the sense that generations will go back and forth between two antithetical world views. Indeed, ... the process is more liable to be dialectical with each generation rejecting the status quo for a new formulation that draws many elements from the past and present experiences. ... ideological history will not exactly repeat itself but instead trace a zig-zag pattern. (Salem, 1994, p. 25)

Shils also indicates the notion of a dialectical correlation between a preceding ideology and the success of a replacement:

Mere rejection of the existing society and the prevailing outlook of the elites of that society is not sufficient. For an ideology to exist, there must also be an attendant vision of a positive alternative to the existing pattern of society and its culture and an intellectual capacity to articulate that vision as part of the cosmic order. (Shils, 1968, p. 69)

Islam's common culture and easily recognized symbols provide supportive ties within an ideology that confronts problems of the day in a new, opposing vision for the future. More important, Islamists reinterpret these symbols and ideas in new and unique ways, while incorporating popular aspects of modern influences and principles as part of their comprehensive social framework/strategy.

Finally, Salem points to the major influence of political *crises* on ideological movements and the related impact on their beliefs. The occurrence of great events, which shake the foundations of the established order and its dominant ideology—such as the disaster of the 1967 Arab defeat by Israel—generally have a profound effect of engendering new ideological responses to changed conditions:

[T]he ability of a dominant class to project its ideology on other classes as a source of political legitimacy is very vulnerable to crises. Crises undercut the authority of an ideology in at least two ways. On the political level, any serious defeat brings into question the performance of the ruling class and the suitability of its ideology. Convinced that the present political arrangement is partially to blame . . . people begin to look for alternative arrangements of power and alternative ideologies to accompany it. On the psychological level, the historical association of any ideology with a painful defeat saps that ideology of its ability to evoke sentiments of optimism, power and confidence [and] becomes itself a symbol of weakness and defeat. (Salem, 1994, p. 29)

This searching by the masses for a new ideology to follow, coupled with the previously noted likelihood of the elite to continue supporting at least the central tenants of their existing ideological standard, further emphasizes the confrontational atmosphere surrounding ideological change. If the current elites will not provide a legitimate vision of required change, then ideologues will soon challenge the status quo deemed as perpetuating a failed social order.

Based upon this general overview of the concept, linkage between Islamist groups is understood to extend beyond similarities of the general environment and fundamental

Islamic religious beliefs to certain dynamics related to the notion of ideology itself. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that the primacy of local socioeconomic and political conditions restrict the breadth of ideological harmony within the overall phenomenon implied by these commonalities. In concluding remarks from a study of the history of ideology, in which he sought to clarify the concept by examining its application in a variety of cases, Terry Eagleton observes the inherent flexibility and individuality in the concept, and cautions against those who would propose a monolithic vision of any ideology, such as political Islam:

Dominant ideologies, and occasionally oppositional ones, often employ such devices as unification, spurious identification, naturalization, deception, self-deception, universalization and rationalization. But they do not do so universally; indeed it is doubtful that one can ascribe to ideology any *invariable* characteristics at all. We are dealing less with some essence of ideology than with an overlapping network of 'family resemblances' We need, then, to look skeptically upon various essentialist cases about ideology [Such] perspectives contain a kernel of truth; but taken in isolation they show up as partial and flawed. (Eagleton, 1991, p. 222)

Examples of variation in Islamism's power and influence across the spectrum of relationships between Islam and political power—and changes introduced by the transition when activists gain power (such as in Iran)—will show how critical it is to understand the nature of political Islam as a grouping of disparate political ideologies, and not as simply a single static, "scripturalist" outgrowth of Islamic Theology.

Thus, the initial attempt of this section to separate the particular Islamist "line-of-thought" from the multifaceted context of the broader Islamic revival, indicates a difficult—but *essential*—first step needed to successfully comprehend political Islam. While there are some aspects common to the general phenomenon throughout the Greater Middle East region—as discussed in Chapter III—the requisite differentiation needed to exhibit the diversity that exists within political Islam will follow, as part of case study surveys in Chapter IV.

In summary, distinguishing among elements within the pervasive Islamic 'revival,' and recognizing the diversity of ideological considerations among the Islamists themselves, are basic requirements to properly perceive the phenomenon, as well as provide a sound basis for beginning further analysis. Hopefully, by differentiating between those individuals and movements who view Islam as theology and those who adhere to various politically-motivated ideological viewpoints—then further distinguishing between the methods used by various groups and individuals to reach their stated goals—some of the misconceptions of political Islam can be overcome and the common misuse of a term like Islamic fundamentalism avoided. With this understanding, the discussion of political Islam will move to a review of those similarities of environment and ideology that exist at various levels of analysis.

II. MODERNIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE THIRD WORLD

The basic premise behind this thesis is based upon the fact that the ubiquitous, grueling processes entailed in modernization and development are *common* to most developing countries of the Third World. In that light, the “crisis” environment concurrently generated by discontinuities existing throughout these *transitional societies* forms the fundamental *source* of the proliferation of ideological political thought—such as political Islam—and related activities throughout the broader Third World. Essentially, this “crisis” environment encompasses many interactive aspects from across the sociopolitical spectrum and, thus, they can understand Islamism as an ideological *response* to the cumulative deterioration of social, political, economic and cultural conditions within various Muslim countries. As will be illustrated in the next chapter, political Islam is a response that makes use of—but is not driven by—the ideas, symbology and history of the Islamic faith to promote an alternative to perceived failing development efforts of mostly secular national governments.

To set the stage for elaborating similarities found in this “crisis” environment and the linkage between political Islamic ideologies and similar phenomena throughout the developing world, the complex effects of modernization and development—and the destructive impact of colonialism—on these societies will be briefly examined first in this chapter. Then, a brief survey of the discontinuities—the detrimental “side effects”—typically generated by the cumulative impact of such processes within transitional countries will be presented, within the framework of a “cause and effect”-type relationship. Since the “crisis” atmosphere is multifaceted, this analysis will attempt to briefly review the process in a comprehensive manner—accounting for various factors of influence, including those related to political economy and sociology, in addition to cultural elements such as religion and values—while acknowledging the constantly interactive nature of the various components. In addition, because the processes involved in modernization and development have both structural/organizational and behavioral/attitudinal components, both aspects will be

examined simultaneously when “defining” elements within these actions and when illustrating manifestations of political, economic, social and cultural change creating the “crisis” conditions. Finally, while the general discussion is focused on typical situations in all developing countries, specific examples are provided at other levels of analysis—such as the Greater Middle East—as appropriate.

To begin with some basic considerations providing background for analysis, one of the most important factors that all Third World countries—not just those of the Greater Middle East—share in common is being faced with the lengthy, wrenching and even painful process of modernization. James Bill and Robert Springborg (1994, p. 3) define modernization as an evolutionary “process by which men and women increasingly gain control over their environment.” As noted in the introduction, the currently pervasive phenomenon of political Islam is actually a modern outgrowth. Islamism and similar Third World ideologies share somewhat standard origins in the historical contexts fostered by modernization and the interrelated concept of *development*, which Monte Palmer (1989, p. 6) defines as: “the evolution of societies from ‘traditional’ forms of political, social, and economic organization centered on the family and the tribe into ‘modern’ forms centering on the state.” Unlike their counterparts in the West, most Greater Middle East states have been faced with a situation of almost “forced” modernization due to their relatively late start in the process (roughly since the turn of the century and for some after World War I) and the pervasive influence of the First World they have experienced since then. Despite attempts at extensive development, regional states remain well short of many of their goals, in some cases creating an environment of “crisis.”

A. TRADITION VERSUS MODERNITY: THE CONFLICT WITHIN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETY

To properly review the principal aspects of modernization and development and their impact on society, it helps to start by comparing and contrasting the general “beginning” and the intended “end” for these complex processes—the transition of traditional societies to

modern ones. Traditional societies differ from more modern ones in many ways, but some more important areas of contrast include: social structure, economies, political systems, cultural systems, behavioral outlooks, ethics and values. While progress within developing countries across these areas is uneven at best, most Third World states exhibit some attributes of both traditional and modern societies in each dimension; such "amalgams" can be labeled *transitional* societies. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 31, 79)

To distinguish between "traditional" and "modern" societies in both structural/organizational and attitudinal/behavioral fields, the primary contrast is in basic social structure:

The social structure of traditional societies is based on the extended family [which] . . . bears primary responsibility for nurturing traditional individuals into adulthood, for shaping their basic values The social structure of modern societies, by contrast, is a highly differentiated network of specialized socioeconomic and political units, which reach their apex in the state. The state, not the extended family bears ultimate responsibility for meeting the needs of the individual. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 31-43).

The economic and political systems have a similar divergence, with traditional societies possessing "poorly differentiated, agrarian, family-based barter economies" operating essentially at subsistence level and "rudimentary" political institutions "dominated by family-based tribal chieftains who justify their authority ascriptively on the basis of lineage, religion or tradition." They also feature low levels of mass political participation. Modern societies, conversely:

. . . are characterized by highly differentiated industrial economies, which both use and generate innovative technology and create a surplus of goods and services sufficient to provide most members of society with a standard of living well in excess of mere subsistence. . . . political systems of modern societies are characterized by complex, highly differentiated organizational structures dominated by elites selected predominantly on the basis of achievement or merit. . . . All political functions . . . are performed by

specialized units . . . [and] mass political participation is intense. (Palmer, 1989, p. 43)

In addition, general behavioral outlooks and value systems are important determinants of political trends, and suggest some major differences in the two positions:

Human behavior tends to reflect the individual's social and cultural milieu. . . . Traditional individuals, reflecting the values of traditional cultures, are said to be passive, fatalistic, conforming, and non-innovative. Modern individuals, by contrast, tend to have a far stronger sense of human volition: to be more aggressive, more innovative, and more imbued with . . . "achievement motivation." . . . Similarly, traditional individuals, reflecting the pervasive role of the extended family . . . are said to be particularistic and parochial. Kinship obligations take primacy Modern individuals, by contrast, are said to be universalistic. Kinship obligations are regularly superseded by occupational, political, and social obligations. Merit and the maximization of personal advantage outweigh kinship ties . . . [and] the state rather than the family is the terminal focus of individual loyalty. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 43-44)

Social and developmental theorists generally assume that both the attitudinal/behavioral patterns of traditional individuals and the structural/organizational aspects of their societies inhibit various types of development, and may actually deny support to a modernizing leader attempting to improve their standards of living.

Thus, the route to modernization is exceedingly difficult, and must go beyond a focus on importing technology and modern institutions to incorporate a comprehensive reorganization of traditional society. Essentially, the process can be seen as a two-staged effort of *disintegration* and *reintegration*. Disintegration entails "the reduced utility and effectiveness of traditional authority, beliefs, and behavior patterns," while reintegration is "the development of new institutions, beliefs, and behavior patterns that are radically different than the old." As such, the concept of *integration*, essentially the "smoothness of fit" between specific components and the aggregate entity, can be applied as a measurement of developmental success across the various dimensions involved. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 45-47)

In Third World countries, however, the process of disintegration is much more successful and thorough, while struggling governments rarely solve the enigma of reintegration on anything close to the same pace. Providing further differentiation, Palmer (1989, p. 7) makes a distinction between development and *change*, with the former being a purposeful type of change that is goal-oriented (namely, to “modernize” across the range of political, economic, social and cultural spheres), while the latter is simply any variation of an existing state or condition (often in a negative manner). Thus, since not all development efforts can be called successful, this “dialectical clash between the challenging forces of modernity and the persistent strength of tradition” (Bill and Springborg, 1994, p. 1) frequently creates undesirable *changes* and great disparities across social, political, economic, cultural and psychological spheres.

The result is the predicament of poorly integrated, transitional societies mired somewhere between the old and the new, fragmented socially—among various divisions of tribe, ethnic or regional group, and religion—with no true sense of national political community. The lack of integration leads to a lack of regime legitimacy—or “the belief among citizens . . . that the state’s political institutions are important, that they must be cherished and preserved from harm”—and institutionalized political institutions, thus denying modernizing elites a crucial basis of strength. Because of continued strong traditional influence, identification with and support for the state lags well behind lingering support for tribal, ethnic or religious organizations. Also, a critical factor is that frequently, regimes are unable to meet the rising demands of their subjects in various critical areas. Within transitional countries, the prevailing atmosphere of “crisis” creates corresponding growing numbers of transitional individuals, filled with anxiety, who question old beliefs and values—while failing to understand or support radically-different behaviors and the rationales behind government-sponsored development drives. Given a “taste” of the more pleasant aspects of modernization, transitional individuals tend to have much higher expectations when compared to traditional society, but lack the requisite skills and appreciation of modern practices to meet them. The resulting frustration creates a “spawning ground” of alienated, angry and naive

individuals who readily respond to ideological declarations and charismatic leadership. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 46-49)

B. GOVERNMENT-LED DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Transitional governments, also hampered by these “crisis” conditions, attempt to meet the demands of their transitional subjects and to make progress in the difficult process of reintegration to stave-off mass opposition. Bill and Springborg succinctly describe the complicated situation faced by regimes:

Modernization is an unsettling, disruptive, painful process. The comforts of traditional habits are lost as these habits are uprooted. In modernizing societies, new processes and institutions seem always to be trapped in a state of becoming . . . as a result, the expected uncertainties of the past have given way to the more frightful and unknown insecurities of the present. In the Middle East, where most of the societies have seriously begun to modernize, any slowing or reversal of the process causes great stress. Yet the uneven supply of national resources, the shortage of technical skills, and the weakness of political leadership are all severe impediments Modernization is a process in which expectations necessarily race beyond their satisfaction. However, satisfaction must never lag too far behind. In most Middle Eastern societies, the gap between sharpened aspirations and their attainment threatens to become a chasm. The consequent frustrations directly promote social upheaval and political unrest. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, p. 5)

Faced with the dual challenges of difficult modernization goals and growing demands from the populace, government development efforts take on a critical role in this turbulent milieu.

Any analysis of development must start from the basic pretense that, while the process entails political, economic, social and cultural dimensions, the *people* of the state or society are the ultimate target of government development efforts. Thus, *social change* is the inevitable result of this effort, and—regardless of the initial intent—such change does not always translate directly into modernized societies. The uneven and often “negative” progress that results creates the atmosphere where ideologies arise and thrive. There are a

variety of additional factors that affect these development endeavors, and the subsequent direction and pace of social change. As such, a comprehensive survey of these influences aids later discussion of the resultant "crisis" environment created by modernization. Of note, while this chapter attempts to point out similarities among states in that environment, the various attributes discussed below will certainly vary across the range of countries in the Greater Middle East—a heterogeneity that not only establishes the basis for Chapter IV's focus on qualities of certain states and the general polycentric character of political Islam, but also must be kept in mind throughout the review of commonalities.

1. Determinants of Development

First, since decision making and development plans are the products of ruling elites and their values, the stance of these elites toward the entire development effort (across various spheres of politics, economics, social issues, culture, etc.) is a critical consideration. Second, a crucial aspect involved is their respective viewpoint and ideological stance on the balance between rapid economic growth and the corresponding diverse social changes that result. The discontinuous processes involved in modernization and development require flexibility, vision, and courage from elites seeking the requisite symmetry for the current situation:

[M]odernization . . . is [a] dynamic that can either retard or promote political development. Dramatic economic and technological growth increases the needs [of] population. . . . such advancement [also] strengthens the capacity of the political elite to exert influence and control. In order to muster the strength necessary to exploit scarce resources and to initiate effective planning programs, Middle Eastern elites have often relied upon authoritarian political methods. When they do this, they risk sliding into repressive and oppressive modes of behavior that fatally weaken their capacities for political development. . . . On the other hand, if the elites govern loosely and decentralization reigns supreme, they may also forfeit their developmental capacities as society breaks down into conflicting ethnic, regional, and class-based cliques. . . . The process is a delicate balance of capacity and demands. Increasing demands require an enhanced capacity to meet them. Development involves a constant push and pull between the two sides. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, p. 12)

The elites are faced with the dilemmas of this situation on a daily basis, as demands upon their governments continue to grow from rapidly rising populations. Regime-types and their associated outlooks can range from “national socialist” systems—such as seen in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Algeria—where emphasis is placed upon an ideological blending of nationalism and traditional religious and social values in an attempt to foster economic progress, to the traditional regimes—like Saudi Arabia and the Gulf monarchies—that emphasize controlled growth of the economy and an attempt to minimize disruption of the religious and tribal basis for their authority that would likely result from rapid social change. “Knowledge of an elite’s core values provides an important guide to predicting how vigorously that elite is likely to pursue rapid economic growth as well as the types of modernization programs it will select. . . . Knowledge of elite values also helps predict the severity of the means they are likely to use in their efforts to mobilize the masses in the pursuit of their goals.” (Palmer, 1989, pp. 20-23) While the focus of this analysis is not to identify why certain elite choices are made or to debate social determinism, this section merely points out key roles played by elites (and their ideologies) in the overall modernization effort. These roles are much less restricted than in the First World, due to the limitations of formal political institutions in most Third World countries, and bring the whims of rulers more centrally into the policy making process.

A second key factor concerning governments and elites—related to this idea of limited constraints on government—is the legacy, especially evident in the countries of the Greater Middle East, of the great size and scope of state intervention into nearly all aspects of society. Alan Richards and John Waterbury (1990, Ch. 7), in examining this situation note that, whatever the legitimacy granted any particular state or its specific policies of the moment, there is apparent widespread acceptance of interventionist policies by governments as legitimate and necessary to harness the state’s resources to develop society—a stark contrast to Western notions of the proper role of the state:

[I]t is conceded in the abstract that the state and its leaders have a right and an obligation to set a course for society and to use public resources to pursue that course. Two principles . . . of Western liberal tradition are given short shrift. One is that state authorities, to the extent possible, should confine themselves to themselves to the maintenance of law and order, [limited] regulation of economic life, provision of basic social-welfare benefits, and defense of the borders. The Middle Eastern state has taken on functions vastly more complex than these, and its citizenry has endorsed the effort. Second, the emphasis is on the ends of state intervention, and checks on balances are not seen as preventing abuse of power but rather as impeding the state's course toward its goals. Therefore, to some extent, there has been an acceptance of a high concentration of power—economic, administrative, and military. (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 184-185)

While noting that historical and cultural factors may play a part, they believe that the fundamental basis for this situation is the “politics of decolonialization and development,” the two key subjects within this chapter.

The critical factor involved in elite/government activities is the ability to efficiently collect and manage available resources to meet development requirements. One key factor in this effort is *mobilization*, which Palmer (1989, pp. 25-26) defines as “an elite’s capacity to *motivate* its subjects, and to *organize* and *direct* them once they have become motivated” (emphasis in original). In their attempts at government-led development, ruling elites possess varying degrees of three basic types of *assets* (or resources) which provide them the capacity for mobilization: *economic* assets, *coercive* assets and *symbolic* or *identitive* assets. These are defined as follows:

Coercive assets refer to the ability of an elite to force compliance with its wishes through the application of force. Economic assets refer to the ability of to manipulate mass behavior through the granting or withholding of material rewards. Symbolic assets refer to the ability to *persuade* the masses to support specific programs on a voluntary basis because they believe that it is the right and proper thing to do and because they believe that the ruling elite has their best interests at heart. (Palmer, 1989, p. 26; emphasis in original)

While typically relying on combinations of these types of assets, it is a basic fact that many transitional regimes, with obvious vested interest in preserving the established order, are faced with a need to mobilize the masses while lacking essential legitimacy required for symbolic persuasion, or the resources and institutions to provide appropriate material rewards.

Thus, they are forced to rely more on coercive force in their attempts to maintain control and carry out development plans. A spiraling cycle tends to develop as coercion typically broadens the alienation and frustration of the masses, creating the need for even stronger coercive measures. As Palmer (1989, p. 31) states, "the ultimate test of the organizational and motivational capacity of the political system is its ability to involve the masses in its modernization projects." In order to develop the requisite level of *voluntary* support for elite programs among the masses—and the corresponding belief and faith in government leaders and institutions—regimes lacking an overabundance of material resources (to "buy" support) must normally pursue a more balanced development effort accounting for required growth in all dimensions involved, especially the area of political participation. "[H]owever, the ability to transform fundamentally the basic power configurations has been the rarest form of political change" (Bill and Springborg, 1994, p. 19). Instead, regimes pursue the dangerous gamble of repression. For example:

The forces of modernization, by providing political elites with more sophisticated techniques of control, can enhance their capacity to meet demands and to provide security. They also, however, can permit elites to stifle demands through repression. Calls for participation, equal opportunity, and justice can be smothered by "security" forces . . . Security through repression is often a harbinger of violence and upheaval. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, pp. 9-10)

Further examination of this crucial aspect of the transitional environment will be undertaken below in considering the problems associated with state and nation building. Elite values form the basis for their ideologies and, when combined with elite assets, are the single-most

important parts of the development equation in transitional societies. Success or failure in development is most often a result of this particular component.

Next, *political institutions* are also key determinants of regime ability to reach modernization goals. These institutions, though often lacking in substance in most transitional states, are significant because they provide an indication of the critical “organizational and motivational capacity of the state” to mobilize its human and natural resources behind the development effort. The *government bureaucracy*, *political parties*, and *military and security forces* are primary components of concern here. The bureaucracy carries out the plans and runs the development programs desired by elites. Program success is largely determined by the efficiency and energy applied by members of the bureaucracy—which in developing states are “minimally effective at best.” Political parties are important because they serve as a bridge/communication channel between elites and the “targeted” masses. With proper organization and a receptive political environment, parties can help in the critical socialization process needed to mobilize support for the regime. Nevertheless, most Third World states have poorly developed political organizations due to an improper balance between the developmental spheres and an environment that inhibits suitable political development:

Changes occasioned by the forces of modernization usually occur in the physical environment and are most dramatically evident in the areas of technology and economics. Impressive change here, however, does not necessarily signal basic alteration in the sociopolitical system. Traditional patterns of power and authority tend to resist fundamental change. Personal equality, political participation, and social justice are usually the last issues to be confronted. Political elites have vested interests in preserving ongoing political patterns. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, p. 9)

The import of Western institutions has changed the face of the political arena, but little substantial change has been noticed in traditional patterns of rule:

Political institutionalization has never been absent in the Middle East. Masses and elites were bound together by a number of important linkage structures, which included elaborate networks of intermediaries. . . . [This] personalized institutionalization resulted in numerous lines of communication through society. . . . Grievances could often be aired and demands could be heard. The political elite, however, enjoyed the prerogative of action and redress. The petitioners lacked the institutional organization that could guarantee the satisfaction of their demands. The coming of political parties and parliaments has seldom changed this form of participation. Parties have often existed as loose collections of personal cliques that have penetrated little beyond the upper crust of society. . . . they have served largely as the instruments of powerful individuals and small elites. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, pp. 20-21)

Finally, military and security forces enter the development equation primarily as the institutions charged with providing sufficient security and political order to permit development. As noted, these forces are often used to enforce mass compliance and quell unrest, especially among regimes lacking legitimacy and without strong development of political institutions. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 27-28)

Regime development efforts—in this case primarily of the economy—also hinge on available *resources*, both material and human, which vary widely across developing countries. States with abundant *natural resources* and mineral wealth can avoid some obstacles to growth faced by their disadvantaged neighbors when they translate these resources into government income. Such countries are referred to as *rentier* states, because their wealth is based more upon economic rents received from export of raw materials rather than from national production. Royalties from mineral wealth permit such states to benefit from sometimes enormous wealth without developing significant production capabilities. Each country generally benefits—based again upon the variable of regime capabilities previously noted— from an increased standard of living and government subsidies, a reduced requirement for taxes, and the ability to import high technology and hire foreign labor and technical experts. Host states will also often avoid major development of the political infrastructure, because large incomes allow them to adequately meet the peoples' demands

without greatly expanding popular participation. However, since these economies often have such narrow bases of support and limited productive capabilities in other areas, these regimes have very vulnerable economic assets—and thus the security and stability of the overall system come into question. Also, as these states spend their revenues, new demands typically arise from members of society that in turn reduces the alternatives for political action by regimes. (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 16-17; see also Beblawi and Luciani, 1987)

As for other states—those without the comfort of inordinate wealth to distribute—they must deal with the adversities of seeking rapid economic growth within an often hostile world economic system. They can pursue various policies or strategies (or combinations), such as import substitution or manufacture-export-led growth, in seeking rapid economic development—yet each of these has its own particular drawbacks and discontinuities. One important constant that most regional governments have to face is the issue of a “food gap” between agricultural production and rising consumption—an increasing difficult problem even in countries rich in agricultural lands. Alan Richards and John Waterbury (1990, pp. 139-146) provide a “straightforward” analysis of the food-security problem, hinting at the actual gross mismanagement among the developing states of the region:

Rapid population growth and per capita income expansion due to the oil boom of the 1970s increased the demand for food. At the same time, natural and social constraints (sometimes exacerbated by state policies) limited the domestic supply response. . . . [D]emand for food in the region will continue to increase rapidly. Population growth is unlikely to fall dramatically. . . . It is reasonable to conclude that there will be little reduction in the food gap from the demand side. (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 140-141)

Lingering problems involving development of the agricultural sector will impede overall economic development efforts. The continued stagnation in growth of this crucial sector will

exacerbate the problems of rural migration to the cities, unemployment, burdensome food subsidies, and potential “food riots.”

Regime planning for economic growth often focuses almost exclusively on the issue of industrialization—this sector is often seen as “driving” the rest of the economy. However, the methods employed have aggravated the previous problems of the economy:

Partly because of a desire to have the most modern technology available, and partly because of distorted price signals, much of the industry installed in the Middle East during the last generation has been capital intensive. Consequently, the amount of investment required to create a job has been very high. Due to managerial inefficiencies and foreign exchange bottlenecks, these same industrial facilities have been plagued by idle capacity, driving up the amount of investment needed to add to output. . . . Perhaps worst of all, however, these industries have all too often not produced the kinds of simple consumer goods that the bulk of the population wants and can afford. [Instead, they] turn out relatively expensive, “top of the line” consumer durables, like refrigerators . . . and automobiles. (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p. 17)

By failing to gain full benefit from their comparative advantage of cheap labor costs and shifting capital to other critical development sectors, modernizing elites not only broke a cardinal rule of economics, but they added problems and frustrations to a mounting “crisis” milieu. Moreover, when seeking foreign investment capital or government aid to finance industrialization, regimes must be concerned with “strings” that are attached, as well as the standard distress from what is typically a required total restructuring of their economies.

In addition, these “have not” states are often burdened with much larger populations and the associated larger scale of problems they create. This raises related issues concerning *human resources*. The people of transitional societies, while noted as the target of development efforts, are also critical actors in bringing government plans to fruition, and they are especially critical to those regimes without great mineral wealth to rely on for economic security. In seeking to raise the level of technical skills and productive capacity of its citizens, large-scale education programs are undertaken. However, these systems are often

substandard and lacking in the technical and scientific courses required to compete in the modern business and industrial environments. Many technically advanced students travel overseas for training and education, and often remain there after their schooling is over—creating a “brain drain” effect that hampers the overall development effort. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 30-31)

In summary, since politics can be seen as guiding the development process, the functions of elites and political institutions—as well as the resources available and strategies implemented—are central to determining the success of planned economic growth and modernization. To be considered “developed,” Bill and Springborg (1994, p. 7) hold that a political system must be able “to initiate, absorb, and sustain continuous transformation”; the primary focus is on the fostering and satisfaction of citizens’ “demands for equality of opportunity, political participation, and social justice.” The structure of the system should be sound enough to cope with the tremendous social upheaval and stress that accompany the development process, able to meet the needs and expectations of the population, and maintain control. Beyond such “political” development, considerations must also be made as to meeting other basic requirements; a country’s political system must not only control its population and resource base but also keep these assets secure from foreign exploitation. Finally, an ability to mobilize human and material resources in support of economic and social development goals is a necessity for progress. While First World states have been successful in developing the requisite political institutions to meet these standards, most Third World states have yet to exhibit such capacity. Part of the problem plaguing developing countries is preserving the delicate balance required between centralized control of the fragile economic development effort and developing sound political institutions, which broaden popular participation and provide an outlet for some social unrest—as well as maintain at least some measure of legitimacy for the government and authenticity in its values and goals. Vast differences in time scale and mass expectations, coupled with the extensive penetration of their societies by foreign influences, today’s developing countries

have major disadvantages when compared with their predecessors in the West. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 16-19)

2. The Impact of Colonialism on Social Change

As “the single most important factor in the erosion of the world’s traditional societies,” (Palmer, 1989, p. 80) European colonialism had a tremendous influence on most developing countries in the Greater Middle East, transforming their traditional societies and providing some “encouragement” in their start along the arduous path of modernization. The most prominent aspect entailed the previously noted penetration of foreign influences, such as secularism, into nearly all aspects of the environment. In fact, following World War I, the aggressive spread of influences from the European countries—which benefitted from having begun their developmental agendas earlier and under different circumstances—was so great that soon the countries of Third World could no longer be viewed as conforming to the traditional model: the Third world’s transitional societies had been “born.”

Not all these influential elements were unfavorable, but most had at least some negative aspects which created discontinuities within the developing states. For example, colonialism provided the obvious benefits of modern health practices and education systems to Third World countries. However, modern medicine soon led to the exponential growth of populations—outstripping the abilities of traditional subsistence economies of states to provide basic necessities for their citizens. Improved education meant greater exposure to a variety of new influences—such as the mass media, foreign languages, ideologies and lifestyles, and even new political models—which further increased interaction with foreign societies and created an increasing spiral of aspirations and expectations which in even the best of circumstances would have been hard to satisfy. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 80-85, 91-92; Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 49, 112-136) Colonial rulers also sought to use the bases of traditional power to an advantage, focusing support to—and thus control over—traditional rulers who now were insecure in their leadership positions.

Nevertheless, since the principal reason behind European interest in the region was economic—major involvement in the region generally began in the wake of the Industrial

Revolution and the corresponding search for foreign markets—it was in this sphere that massive change and the erosion of traditional principles was most noticeable initially. As part of the transition process, colonialism brought changes to the traditional economies—with the transformation of barter economies to standardized monetary systems, and the shift from subsistence-level to mercantile-based productive power as exporters of raw materials. As workers began to receive regular wages, they gained mobility previously unheard of in the region and the potential to significantly better their status by accumulating property and wealth. Dramatic disparities in earnings rates lead to the growth of economic classes in societies that were previously essentially uniform. Since penetration of these regions was aimed at gaining markets as well as access to primary products, members of these transitional societies received a growing supply of European goods and services. The growing distinctions between the “haves” and “have nots” in these states were highlighted by their relative access to these new “luxuries.” From a structural perspective, however, it was the effect of the mercantile system that had the most far-reaching—and lingering—impact on these societies. Essentially, the economic sector was divided into:

[T]hree distinct segments: (1) a commercial urban sector perhaps augmented with some light industry such as spinning or weaving and transportation, (2) a highly organized and developed extractive economy centered upon the country's primary exports, and (3) an unproductive agrarian economy that continued to operate along traditional subsistence lines and that was only marginally influenced by the monetary economies of the commercial and extractive sectors. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 88-89)

These divisions within the economy acted to “sectorize” societies, creating a diversity of relative impacts of the various forces of social change, with individuals in the more commercially-oriented sectors being influenced to a much greater degree than their rural counterparts. More important, emphasis on maximizing gains from single-commodity production hindered broader economic growth—stifling what were at least somewhat diversified economies at the previous lower levels. As Mohammed Ayoob notes:

Colonial rule derailed the evolutionary process of economic development . . . by introducing major discontinuities in the economic sphere in order to extract maximum benefit from the resources of [colonial] societies for the metropolitan economies and to turn them into captive markets for metropolitan manufactured goods. Colonial rule [also] disrupted or destroyed flourishing agricultural economies by switching them from food to cash crops meant for export. It also decimated traditional handicraft industries . . . termed the deindustrialization of colonial economies. Colonial policies also decimated the class of large-scale native traders and financiers that had dominated the monetized sector of the more sophisticated pre-colonial economies . . . (Ayoob, 1995, p.35)

Colonialism also impeded the normal growth of the “modern” social classes, such as the commercially-oriented bourgeoisie, which eventually further undermined mass support for the state’s development efforts.

However, these foreign influences did create a new type of minority class within these transitional societies—the educated, white collared civil servants of the expanding state institutions. The interaction of what was soon to be a Western-oriented elite with the European administrators—even beyond the economic effects of “sectorization” discussed previously—soon formed a small class of natives who had taken advantage of the link between Western education and upward mobility. These elites were best positioned to take over control of the states once the colonizers decided to leave, and had a tremendous bearing on the subsequent development efforts pursued by states. Exposure (and receptivity) to Western scientific methods and ideologies, coupled with closer work with European elites, had a tremendous influence on individuals who held key positions for the future development drives after independence. (Ayoob, 1995, pp. 36-37; Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p. 49)

Nevertheless, the most profound influence of this westernized elite was as role models for the younger generations—with their interaction with the European had brought them wealth and status, and their newly adopted lifestyles, they were living proof of the benefits of “modernization.” In fact, even these relatively prosperous individuals still felt the frustration of being inferior to the Europeans, who monopolized the major positions in

business and government. The pain of continued disappointment was soon channeled into the ideological challenge to colonialism—the captivating, revolutionary force of Third world *nationalism*. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 93-95)

Yet another influence of colonialism, related to the “centralizing” aspects of the mercantile system and rapid population increases, was the massive growth in *urbanization*. Major cities became the focus of colonial administration and commercial activities, creating a conjunctive flow of the populace toward the urban areas, driven by coinciding “push”- and “pull”-type forces. Rural individuals were often “pushed” to go to the cities because the still backward countryside could no longer provide the necessary support for burgeoning masses. Moreover, the urban centers exerted a “pull” on the traditional subsistence-oriented agrarian sector, by offering substantially greater opportunities for individual financial improvement. Colonial commercial activities were often labor intensive extraction operations, bringing greater and greater requirements for workers as the commercial sectors grew. The Dutch Disease—altering the terms of trade in favor of the higher paying urban jobs—and increasing rural education converged to add further impetus to the flow of rural migrants. (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 265-269; Palmer, 1989, pp. 85-86)

The new migrants were greeted with the choking, squalid conditions of the urban slums—and the realization that good paying jobs were scarce and housing usually substandard at best. However, the contrast in conditions compared with their rural origins was even starker when compared with the corresponding displays of wealth by the European businessmen and administrators in the upscale areas of the cities. In addition, the urban areas saw the focus of various “agents” of change, such as the mass media, education systems, indigenous political movements, and labor unions, which were not a part of the rural experience. Thus, urbanization had a number of negative influences, including the open exhibition of disparities in wealth and corresponding frustrations of the “have-nots,” and a concentration of uprooted, lower-class citizenry exposed to a wide range of foreign influences of change. The resultant increase in forms of urban violence created even more

problems for faltering regimes (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 272-278; Palmer, 1989, pp. 86-88)

3. Ideologies of Nationalism and the Drive for Independence

Mounting frustration for people of the developing countries—at the inapplicability of traditional values and behavior in their new environment, at being unable to attain the higher status exclusively maintained by the Europeans, at being incapable of comprehending the universal changes around them and coping appropriately—was the primary result of the colonial experience. From a “technical” viewpoint, these foreign influences of social change were powerful agents of *disintegration* of traditional influences on societies they came into contact with, yet the subsequent requirements for *reintegration* were usually left unmet. Nationalism, promoted by elites seeking to wrest control of their countries from colonial powers, was presented as the answer to the increasing number of problems facing the transitional societies. The strident demands of nationalists for improvements in education and increased control over the affairs of state were often met with repression by colonial administrators, touching off a cycle that typically led to increased politicization of the masses. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 92-95)

Realizing the fragile basis of mass support for the still tenuous idea of an independent “state” or “nation,” as well as the strong influence of tradition on the broader elements of society, the leaders of nationalist movements appealed to traditional religious and ethnic symbols when defining and championing key aspects of these novel ideas. With the allure of an “authentic” basis for change—couched in terms of ethnic or religious “liberation”—nationalist ideologues were able to broaden their following among the more traditionally-oriented members of society. This typically apolitical group, concerned more with removing foreign social and cultural influences than “minor” issues such as economic development and political independence, soon joined in the denouncement of imperialism and Westernization. As a result, the environments of these states were characterized by significant instability—a dilemma which would linger well after the goal of independence had been achieved. In most cases, the turmoil created by nationalism was simply another

element in the complex conditions leading to social disintegration and—despite the promise of a better future—simply helped perpetuate the “crisis” environment. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 94-95)

C. THE TRIALS OF NATION BUILDING IN TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES

1. State Making versus Nation Building

Given generally unstable transitional societies and continued (often enhanced) influence of forces of change, the “ideologically-charged” atmosphere of independence led to further discontinuous social change in the developing world. Third World countries had yet to reach levels of development in various spheres to be considered truly modernized. Surveying their general status, Palmer describes the impact of colonialism as “half-nation building,” adding that “as former colonial territories gained independence . . . their leaders inherited the *framework* for nation building but very little of its substance” (Palmer, 1989, pp. 98-99; emphasis in original). However, an important distinction must be made between the concepts of “*nation* building” and “*state* making.” In analyzing the multifaceted Third World “security predicament,” Ayoob (1995, pp. 21-28) holds that the complex process of “state making” is actually the foremost concern of developing countries, and that weakness in this area is the primary point of contrast from First World states. In distinguishing between “state making” and “nation building,” Ayoob indicates that the former consists primarily of:

. . . expansion and consolidation of the territorial and demographic domain under political authority, . . . maintenance of order in the territory . . . and over the population, . . . [and] extraction of resources . . . essential to support not only the war making and policing activities [of] the state but also the maintenance of apparatuses of state necessary to carry on routine administration, deepen the state’s penetration of society, and serve symbolic purposes. (Ayoob, 1995, pp. 22-23)

This concept of “state making” is in contrast with the related—yet distinctly different—idea of “nation building.” In examining this topic, Ayoob—using definitions and analysis from Charles Tilly and Ernest Gellner—makes the further distinction between national states and nation states; according to Tilly, the former are “relatively centralized, differentiated, and autonomous organizations successfully claiming priority in the use of force within large, contiguous, and clearly bounded territories.” Nation states, by contrast, are states “whose peoples share a strong linguistic, religious, and symbolic identity.” Gellner defines nationalism, a key element of distinguishing the nation state, as “primarily a principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.” Now, the reason for these distinctions is that the “state making” process leads toward the goal of the national state which, in turn, precedes the nation state:

National states that have performed successfully over a long period of time and have . . . knit their people together in terms of historical memories, legal codes, language, religion, and similar factors may evolve into nation-states or at least provide the necessary conditions . . . but they are not synonymous with nation-states. . . . [H]istorically, national states predate the emergence of nation-states; they are the products of the state-making enterprise rather than nationalism or nation building. This is the reality to which Gellner referred when he pointed out that “nationalism emerges only in milieux in which the existence of the state is already very much taken for granted. . . .” (Ayoob, 1995, p. 24)

Thus, the distinction can be made between the rhetoric of nationalism which permeates the transitional states’ environments and the actual processes that regimes are focused upon—the accumulation of state power over territory as a fundamental component of state making. In this view, the Western focus on the need for developing popular consensus in support of building nation states misses the point that these societies have reached the point of development needed to sufficiently support the elusive end-goal of the nation state. Currently, the struggle in transitional societies is to reach intermediate goals focused around the national state and improved security. (Ayoob, 1995, pp. 24-26)

In assessing the circumstances which lie at the root of Third World "crisis" conditions and its general "feeling of acute vulnerability vis-a-vis the international establishment composed of the advanced, industrialized states of the global North," Ayooob points to two factors as crucial considerations: "[F]irst, the stage of state making at which Third World states currently find themselves and, second, the timing of their entry into the international system . . . [of] sovereign states" (Ayooob, 1995, p. 15). Since these third world countries are at early stages of the process, the difficulties of state making would normally be tremendous anyway; however, now these states are forced to deal with a vast array of additional challenges to their fragile situation from both internal and external forces.

To aid in overcoming these dilemmas, new national elites did gain some "assets" developed under their colonial masters, with the provision of national boundaries and centralized control over most regions, along with improved transportation and economic infrastructures to aid integration. Much like other aspects of colonialism, however, such "assets" included drawbacks, too. Great disparities between the states' urban and rural sectors had been allowed to develop in most areas, with an increasing percentage of society lost in the transitional middle ground. The fragile minority of native elites had knowledge of the benefits from the western practices and ideals of their European predecessors, yet they were burdened by the complex realities of development and the necessity to transform what essentially remained a traditional majority of society. The imposition of western-style legal systems and (limited) political institutions, coupled with the nationalist leaders' desire to reduce potential challenges from traditional sources of power, hampered efficient administration and mobilization of the masses. When voluntary support was lacking, the continuation of regime reliance on strong security forces inevitably resulted—yet now it was indigenous elites giving the orders of repression. More important, most of the infrastructures which could aid in nation-building had been developed specifically to support the political and economic interests of the European powers—boundaries were drawn in foreign capitals with little thought for complexities on the ground, and often fragmented longstanding tribal or ethnic homelands. While the colonial rulers did seek to provide requisite security to

ensure economic development could be achieved, pacification efforts were often incomplete and ethnic or religious divisions were often shrewdly used to political advantage—a strategy of “divide and conquer” that only added to the instability following the departure of colonial regimes. (Ayoob, 1995, pp. 34-35; Palmer, 1989, pp. 89, 98-99)

In addition, the inherited economic structure was horribly insufficient to meet the requirements of the times. Development of the agrarian sectors of these economies had been insignificant under the Europeans, and their continued subsistence-levels of production were woefully inadequate for the burgeoning masses of most states. A lack of industrial diversification brought on by colonial concentration on the export of a few primary products often precluded new regimes from altering standard practices of dependance they sought to offset. Reliance on this limited economic base—often tied into the same pre-independence pattern, without the “benefits” of colonial administrative regulation and enhanced commercial relationships—exposed their frail economies to the ravages of the increasingly global economy with little means of protection. Attempts to diversify their economies and increase industrialization have typically met with limited success, especially in the non-oil producing states of the Greater Middle East, but at least one outcome is an expanding middle class that has increased the debate within societies over improved political development. (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 49-50; Palmer, 1989, pp. 89-91, 98-99) In summary, the bonds of economic dependance remained strong, and the independent regimes were faced with the complicated predicament of needing to increase development in a range of areas with few assets to aid them in their efforts. Again, the purpose here is not to debate the accountability for Third World dependance, but simply to form the basis for examining the current “crisis” environment such conditions have created. These current conditions have also seen the rise of a new type of change, the extremely disruptive phenomenon of political violence.

2. The Problem of Political Violence

As previously noted, elites and their regimes employ various assets available to them to conduct their development efforts, and the accumulation of power through state making is a pivotal process in the overall scheme. In addition, the requirement for sound

reintegration, the fundamental “balance” of the development equation that remained to be solved, also confronts them. What is most important for this analysis is that in these more primitive stages state making, the use of coercive policies is more likely—and according to regimes—more necessary to permit requisite state accumulation of power. This necessity is because of the increase in political violence, including demonstrations, riots, assassinations, terrorist activities, and revolutions, has become a prevalent feature of the transitional society, and is yet another indication of the fundamental problems which are inherent to them:

A society [can be] defined as a division of roles and rewards sanctified by religious, ideological, or related belief systems. Violence is the overt indication that the existing division of roles and rewards has ceased to be viable for some segment of that society. A society sustains itself by providing for the security and sustenance of its members. To the extent that acts of violence prevent a society from performing these and related functions, they attack the very foundation of a society's existence. (Palmer, 1989, p. 105)

As an obviously deleterious form of change, regimes must respond to this problem; they have choices to make on how to respond, such as with suppression or accommodation, but each has its disadvantages. For regimes with limited assets besides coercive power, the choice is often not really a choice at all: the needs of establishing and maintaining security in order to conduct the other various efforts of the state—and to provide a secure environment for its populace—make a quick response with the most available assets most likely.

Repression can have a number of effects, as militant groups typically intensify their organizational efforts and develop a more radical ideology in confrontation with security elements. “Suppression frequently has the unintended effect of transforming poorly organized and diffuse opposition groups into disciplined, intensely ideological revolutionary movements.” (Palmer, 1989, p. 105) More important, among the masses, the often protracted violence of a regime repression effort to counter militants leads to politicization

of previously apolitical and tractable members of society. This buildup of oppositional momentum, which is often focused against the elites, as well as the regime, further exacerbates the "crisis" environment:

At best, the intense politicization of the masses in the Third World focuses [their] attention upon the government as the ultimate solution to their problems. [However, this is itself] a particularly severe problem, for . . . few developing areas possess the administrative capacity to meet high levels of mass demands. At its worst, the intense politicization of the masses increases their willingness to use violence as a means of achieving their goals. . . . Protracted violence, by politicizing the population and by fragmenting it into hostile camps, also paves the way for the introduction and spread of radical political ideologies and organizations. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 109-110)

Thus, regimes seeking to foster development within transitional societies are faced with the difficult problem of confronting political violence with assets that may only incite further cycles of violence throughout society. Unfortunately, the conditions of "political overload" that these regimes experience, coupled with the fundamental problems which beset their societies, makes these "no win" confrontations increasingly likely in the future.

D. THE DISCONTINUITIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Keeping within the framework of a "cause" and "effect"-type representation for the typical circumstances generating the Third World's collective "crisis" environment, the pivotal concern now is the results of the trauma-filled processes reviewed previously. The focus must be on the repercussions and discontinuities created, which in turn will form the underpinning for the next chapter's focus on the specific regional history of related issues and events followed by the common attributes of the atmosphere of "crisis." An important consideration is how unique the situation that exists now is, especially when comparing the development processes in their earlier time and setting in the West:

The contemporary era . . . is fundamentally different any earlier time because scientific advances and technological revolutions have wrought

unprecedented change. This change spreads rapidly because of the increasingly interdependent nature of the world. Modernization . . . races onward at a breakneck pace. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, p. 8)

The unfortunate result is that the states of the developing world are at a great disadvantage when attempting to overcome the obstacles to modernization:

The earliest national states were the products of a long period of uncoordinated, although often simultaneous, political acts undertaken . . . [throughout] Western Europe. This development also happened to coincide and interact with important social and economic factors, such as changes in the mode of production, and the consequent emergence of powerful new social forces and economic and political interest groups. The Third World is attempting to replicate this largely unpremeditated and uncoordinated evolutionary process but on a ridiculously short timetable and with a predetermined set of goals. The existence of a model to emulate, and the pressures generated by international and domestic elites' demands that postcolonial states translate their juridical statehood into effective statehood within the shortest possible time, make the task of state makers in the Third World so difficult as to border on the impossible. (Ayoob, 1995, p. 32)

This grim prospect returns the emphasis to time and the nature of social change. Because of a combination of factors, developing states are presented with a situation in which the rapid pace of events has left them in a state of—using Ayoob's term—"political overload." The critical element is the nature of the forces of change—as opposed to development—within modern transitional societies which, though essentially the same as previous eras, now proceed at the aforementioned "breakneck pace." To reiterate:

Change means that established social, economic, and political patterns are being altered. [On the other hand,] Development means that such changes are directed toward greater productivity or other planned targets such as greater social or political integration. (Palmer, 1989, p. 130)

Palmer adds that, while the stimulus for change may often vary across these states, the process of social change “tends to be *cumulative*, *reciprocal*, and *discontinuous*.” Specifically, he asserts:

Change tends to be *cumulative* in the sense that the frustrations and conflicts unleashed by the myriad sources of social change in the Third World accumulate until they reach a point at which they overwhelm the capacity of traditional political leaders to rule effectively. . . . The *reciprocal* nature of change refers to the fact that the circle of change is perpetuated and expanded by the tendency of the diverse forces of social change to reinforce or to feed upon one another. . . . [and] The process of change has also been *discontinuous*. Rather than a smooth, uniform progression away from traditional social structures, culture and behavior, the breakdown of traditional society has been uneven and sporadic. (Palmer, 1989, p. 128)

Each of these concepts will aid in analysis, but the notion of discontinuities is extremely important to understanding the “effects” of modernization and development. Discontinuities within transitional societies occur when some sectors of society or institutions undergo change at a different pace than others. Besides structural/organizational aspects, there is a psychological dimension to this concept, since variations in the rate of change for behaviors and attitudes occur within and between societies. Specifically, Palmer surveys five categories of discontinuities—demographic, group, structural-cultural, occupational and personality—which can provide the conclusion to this chapter. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 128-129)

Demographic discontinuities center primarily around the problem of urbanization and the extreme differences in rates of change between the urban centers and rural areas of the developing world. The cities see the focus of most of the activities and influences which engender changes in society, such as government, political and commercial operations, a confluence of mass media and higher levels of education among the populace, the majority of foreigners and foreign influence, as well as the dilemmas of urbanization and unemployment previously noted. “While the evidence that urbanization facilitates change

is overwhelming, the link between urbanization and economic development is not at all clear." (Palmer, 1989, pp. 129-130)

Palmer (1989, pp.130-134) also notes how *Groups or classes* and members of certain *occupations* within society display discontinuities related to social change. The variety of backgrounds and social influences lead to a heterogeneity in individual receptivity to changes in the environment. For example, minorities or status-deprived groups will have a different perspective of the status quo than an elite majority. Certain professions, often related to income levels, the contact with foreign influences or those previously noted traits of urban versus rural environments, also vary in rates of change. Disparities in wealth correspond to differing levels (and issues) of frustration and flexibility toward shifts in the social environment. Levels of education are also a major factor of consideration. Members of the new middle classes have been shown as "modernizing" much more quickly than less-educated members of the lower class.

When discussing *structural-cultural*—and the related *personality*—discontinuities, the emphasis centers on the fact that, while most of the changes previously discussed are more structural in nature, the individual response to such changes will vary:

From a psychological perspective, it is clear that structural and environmental changes can and often do modify attitudes and behavior. One problem in the analysis of social change in developing areas, however, is that the changes produced by environmental stimuli do not follow a smooth and easily predictable pattern. . . . Individuals also often respond to some structural changes . . . but not to others. Under most circumstances there is a time lag between changes in an individual's structural environment and corresponding changes in his or her adaptive response. This lag may be years or it may be measured in generations. [William F.] Ogburn calls this time period between [structural] changes . . . and corresponding changes in human attitudes and behavior *cultural lag*. (Palmer, 1989, p. 134)

These cultural influences create conditions in which factors such as alterations in levels of education, while noticeably central to individual-level receptivity to change in some groups of society, will still only have a limited impact in overcoming specific indigenous cultural

barriers to modernization. Variations in levels of productivity and group behaviors across a range of cultures from the developing countries are examples of these discontinuities.

Focusing in greater depth on personality discontinuities, Palmer (1989, pp. 136-139) develops four types of “attitudes and behavior patterns[:] . . . demand behavior, productivity behavior, security behavior, and self-regulatory behavior.” *Demand behavior* can be defined as the levels of demand and the expectations members of society place on political systems. Education levels will transform the traditional mind set into one with greater expectations in the present life rather than being satisfied with seeking “reward in the hereafter.” Conversely, “*production-related behaviors* such as innovation and entrepreneurship remain low and are not easily instilled” in the developing countries. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 136-137; emphasis added) This is the key input to Ayoob’s condition of state “political overload”:

A little education can also be a dangerous thing, for it often teaches individuals to become consumers long before it teaches them to become producers; it teaches them to place demands upon the government long before it imbues them with the responsibilities of citizenship. . . . It would be fair to suggest that many developing areas are building a supervisory class before they are building a working class of skilled and unskilled labor. Thus, while the forces of change rapidly create new expectations, they seldom engender a corresponding desire to produce more to meet those expectations. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 136-137)

In terms of *security behavior*, security values—the continued dependence on traditional ties (family, ethnic background, religion) for providing an individual “sense of security” and as a means of influence—typically remain high within transitional societies. Such influences are obviously harmful to development efforts, as reliance on family and parochial ties for preferential treatment significantly adds to the impact of the demand behavior previously noted. In a related concept, the slow development of *self-regulatory* or citizenship behaviors among transitional individuals hinders the functions of governments and reduces their mobilization capacity; such individuals hold little respect for government institutions or property, and casual “ripping off” the regime is prevalent. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 137-138)

In summary, the cumulative, reciprocal, and discontinuous nature of social changes in these transitional societies has set the stage for a "crisis" environment of epidemic proportions. Developing state governments are faced with sometimes insurmountable problems, due to various limitations on their assets and related capacity for mobilization. The rapid rise in expectations from the populace, coupled with the usually low levels of economic/ material assets at the regimes' command and typically limited levels of legitimacy, force a reliance on hollow rhetoric and increased repression as routine government policy. The lingering strength of traditional ties is antithetical to the advance of modernization, hampering development efforts across each dimension of activity. The burdens of state making and goals of nation building often become incompatible given the restrictions on time and the external influences which beleaguer modernizing elites. Capacity for mobilization is hindered by an insufficient ability to socialize citizenry; the drive for economic development—often seen as the "answer to all problems"—siphons funding from critical institutions such as schools and social services, as well as from funding for health care and general infrastructure improvements, while providing few "solutions" for mounting problems. The critical "second half of the equation," the reintegration or resocialization of society, is incomplete and unsuccessful in most states of the Greater Middle East. Faced with myriad traumas and the uncertainties of transitional society, individuals as well as governments across the region seek new ideologies to aid in coping with the dilemmas of daily life—and Islam is often a critical element. With the fervent, yet simple, slogan of "Islam is the answer," the Islamists are increasingly enchanting to individuals entrapped in this environment of "crisis."

III. POLITICAL ISLAM: A COMMON THIRD WORLD RESPONSE TO CRISIS

Whether revolutionary or reformist, conservative or an ideology of change, the employment of Islamic ideology in political contexts provides the potential for great power and influence within the developing world's Muslim societies. Through the reinterpretation of religious symbols and ideas, Islam has been a primary pillar of support for a broad spectrum of modern governments, from totalitarian states to ones espousing greater political pluralism and democracy—a fact illustrated in various Chapter IV case studies. Before focusing on specifics and the diversity of political Islam, however, it is helpful to first explore general areas of commonality that can be found both within the phenomenon, and between political Islam and other ideologies within both the Greater Middle East and in broader Third World environments. The basis for such broad ideological similarities is the common “crisis” milieu—generated by the discontinuous processes accompanying modernization—and the concurrent individual-level psychological quandary found within these transitional societies.

Since ideologies have been shown to develop in relation to the historical context of their sociopolitical environment, specific background information will be assembled for political Islam. First, a survey of the political history of the Greater Middle East in the modern era—the period since World War I in which the aggregate conditions and events created what Salem describes as an “age of ideology” in the region—is provided. While relating general trends and key events, which have affected the common regional environment, parallels to political Islam can be drawn from the rise and fall of some primary ideologies that have influenced regional countries over that time. The brief historical perspective on the modern political environment sets the stage for a synopsis of primary components of the resultant “crisis” atmosphere that is the norm throughout the contemporary Greater Middle East. Since political Islam is the “latest” ideology to confront this threatening milieu—and the primary focus of this analysis—further review of the common background provided by the symbols and ideals of the religion, and the historic relationship between Islam and politics is then presented. Finally, to close the circle of

“Third World” commonality, a comparison between political Islam and another religio-political movement of the developing world, liberation theology, will conclude this chapter. A general outline of the Islamist movements, and the “fundamentals” of their unique response to conditions of transitional society, is followed by a basic review of liberation theology, and then key aspects of the two will be correlated to show the strong similarities between these religio-political phenomena.

A. MODERN POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST

History has repeatedly shown that the rise of activist Islamic religious movements seeking to reconstruct the established order is generally a predictable result of corresponding deep social crises—a cause-and-effect relationship that is relevant to the situation in the Muslim world today (see Voll, 1983; Esposito, 1992, pp. 49-50). Thus, an examination of each of the dimensions—political, social, cultural, economic and psycho-spiritual—of the “incubational” milieu created by social change and giving rise to Islamist ideologies (Dekmejian, 1995, Ch. III) is a necessary starting point to properly analyze Islamism as a whole. Such a survey is undertaken in the next section, but a brief look at the political history of the Greater Middle East region is needed first—to develop a basis for specific discussion. Though specific conditions vary across the Greater Middle East region and from country to country—as do Islamist responses—the common factors seen in political Islam throughout the region can be drawn directly from the general historical context from which societies have evolved—especially aspects related to the processes of modernization and development.

1. The Modern Era as an “Age of Ideology” in the Greater Middle East

The rise of ideologies has been a commonplace occurrence throughout the world whenever countries are subjected to the strains of modernization and unbalanced development as described in Chapter II. Edward Shils explains some reasons behind this activity:

Ideologies arise in conditions of crisis and in sectors of society to whom the hitherto prevailing outlook has become unacceptable. . . . [They develop in response to] strongly felt needs . . . for an explanation of important experience, for the firm guidance of conduct, and for a fundamental vindication or legitimation of the value and dignity of the persons who feel these needs. (Shils, 1968, p. 69)

The effect of modernization and the discontinuities of social change are no different for the Greater Middle East than any other part of the developing world. Extreme socio-cultural strain stemming from "the breakdown of traditional social and cultural systems," created what Salem (1994, pp. 2, 4-5) calls an "age of ideology" within the Arab world (and correspondingly in the broader Greater Middle East), a period of activity which—despite an observed decline (in his opinion) in central importance of ideologies—still continues today. In a similar statement of the regional prominence of ideological political thought during the modern era—that also acknowledges inherent instability and a "transitory" nature of regional ideologies which supports this fluidity—Bill and Springborg state that:

Middle Eastern ideologies tend toward instability and fragmentation. They are unstable in that they are prone to rapid change and fragmented because they do not inspire the wholehearted commitment of all those for whom the message is intended. Many countries in the region have ethnic, linguistic and/or religious minorities that subscribe only partially, if at all, to the ideologies sanctioned by their respective states. . . . [P]olitical behavior and beliefs are strongly conditioned by immediate demographic and political circumstances and are, therefore, subject to change according to those circumstances. This plasticity at the communal level is mirrored by the multiplicity and flexibility of personal identities. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, pp. 31-32)

While their statements seem to fit better in the next chapter stressing the diversity of political Islam, the evidence provided of the somewhat ephemeral nature of regional ideologies does support the notion of inherent receptivity to new introductions into political discourse. They also note that the emphasis has been on rhetorical "style" over concrete "substance" within politics in the region:

Middle Eastern political leaders typically pepper their speeches with ideological terms, national and religious imagery, and attacks on domestic opponents and foreign enemies. . . . Middle Eastern governments seek to legitimate themselves less through references to financial statements than through manipulating nationalist, religious, and other symbols. In the Middle East the primary purposes of ideology . . . are not to define concrete objectives or identify strategies. . . . Instead, ideologies are intended “to reassure both articulator and audience, to engender solidarity, and to resolve problems of personal or group identity.” They are, in the words of Clement Henry Moore, expressive rather than practical. (Bill and Springborg, 1994, pp. 30-31)

Thus, the ideologies of those in power have often not been supported by hard results and present an inviting target for a charismatic ideologue who might oppose them. Similarly, the contemporary phenomenon of political Islam can be seen as the latest ideological *response* to a “societal crisis of multidimensional proportions.” (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 23) and the failure of preceding ideologies to create solutions to various problems. Thus, the common “conditions of crises” that foster the growth of political Islam must be viewed at various levels of analysis to achieve an appropriate and effective basis for both understanding, and subsequent comparison and contrast. The first examination will consider the historical aspects of these circumstances and also a variety of preceding ideologies.

2. Predecessors to the Islamist Response to Challenges from the West

An important influence of the contemporary Islamic ‘revival’ actually began prior to the critical period of colonialism, occurring during the time of rising Western power and European expansion and “penetration” in the late 19th century—this was a series of Islamic reform movements known collectively as “Islamic modernism.” The Islamic modernists sought to “reformulate” their Islamic heritage in response to the challenges of modernity and the related declining strength and pride of the Islamic community. Through emphasis upon the compatibility of Islam with aspects of Western development such as reason, science and technology, these reformers promoted a process of selective acculturation aimed at developing an Islamically-based rationale for national independence, and social, legal and

educational reform. Because Islamic modernism was confined mostly to the intellectual elites, however, it had limited influence on the masses as "it failed to produce a systematic reinterpretation of Islam and to develop effective organizations to preserve and propagate its message more broadly in Muslim society" (Esposito, 1985, p. 299). Nevertheless, Islamic modernism did impact the Muslim community's development and its overall worldview, by reawakening Muslims to the past strength and glory of their faith, and demonstrating the compatibility between modern sociopolitical reform and Islam. Moreover, these reformers recognized the difference between acquiescing to Western imperialism and selective acceptance of Western ideas and technology. They promoted the need for Muslim autonomy and unity—while denouncing the ill-effects of colonialism and dependency. While the results of some of their efforts did impact the mind set of contemporary Islamists, the more important impact was on new movements founded throughout the region in the early 20th century—based upon themes of anti-colonial independence and modern nationalism. (Esposito, 1992, pp. 55-63; Husain, 1995, pp. 95-113)

These nationalist movements, which became noticeably more active in the period between the two World Wars, can be seen not only as a reaction to Western imperialism but as a natural product of Westernized reforms which began in the last years of the Ottoman Empire. Aware of the growing threat of European expansionism, the Ottoman rulers had also recognized and admired the strength and vitality of the West. To bolster the flagging strength of the Muslim world, they sought to imitate the West's military, economic and political modernization programs by developing Western-oriented education programs and bureaucratic institutions. Modern European learning and technology would form the basis for reform, reinvigorating Muslim society and enabling a forceful reaction to the external threat from the West. As such, reform was not based upon direct pressure from internal societal forces or derived from Islamic political and religio-cultural identity and history; it was based on Western models, and imposed from above by Muslim rulers. While Islamic rationales were employed to legitimize these processes, the laws, ideology and institutions of the state gradually began to reflect Western *secularism*—a transformation that altered the

traditional Islamic basis and legitimacy of Muslim society by limiting religion and Islamic law to personal life. At least two important outcomes of these developments should be noted: First, the development of Western-oriented legal and educational systems caused tremendous growth in Western influences. Within Muslim society—a new Westernized minority of intellectual elites emerged (even before major Western penetration via colonialism) which contrasted with the traditionally-educated, Islamically-oriented majority; and second, the Muslim rulers' primary desire for modernization was to strengthen and consolidate their power and economic systems, and not to increase political participation of their peoples—popular attempts at substantive political reform were crushed and the masses were excluded from participation in the planning and implementation of developmental programs. (Esposito, 1992, pp. 51, 53-54; Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p. 47)

3. Colonialism in the Greater Middle East

In the aftermath of World War I, the previous challenge to the Muslim world from the West was dramatically altered. A system of mandates set up under the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres left the French and British dominating the Middle East, including a majority of the former Ottoman empire outside present-day Turkey and Iran. The British had already established a firm position in Egypt, while the French actively colonized portions of North Africa. In general, European colonialism not only transformed indigenous social, economic, political and educational institutions but redrew boundaries and designated new leaders throughout the Muslim world. Moreover, the implicit belief that Christianity's inherent superiority was responsible for Europe's strength and expansion was reflected in the policies and statements of the new colonial governing officials. Seeking to "enlighten the natives," European rulers initiated campaigns to educate Muslims in the history, sciences and languages of the West—and the virtues of Christian faith. Meanwhile, the conditions of "crisis" began to develop in societies of the Greater Middle East:

Muslim views of the West and responses to its power and ideas varied from rejection and confrontation to admiration and imitation. However, the prevailing mood was one of conflict and competition. For many, colonialism

conjured up memories of the Crusades; the European challenge and aggression was but another phase of militant Christianity's war with Islam. (Esposito, 1992, p. 51)

Further stress was added in the early postwar years when Kemal Ataturk, the victorious new leader of Turkey, who after ousting the foreign armies from Turkish soil moved to establish a secular state through various reforms and the crucial step of abolishing the Muslim Caliphate—seen as an archaic remnant of the Ottoman past for the new “right-sized” state. Taken together, the various events obviously had a tremendous psychological impact on the Muslim community, reversing the basic pattern of Muslim self-rule that had lasted since the Prophet's time, and engendering a profound sense of uncertainty and a questioning of Islamic history and belief—in short, the Muslim world was faced with an acute identity crisis. (Esposito, 1992, pp. 47-49, 52)

4. Independence and the “Success” of Nationalism

In the years prior to World War II, the interrelated concerns of national identity (nationalism) and independence became prominent features of the Muslim world's sociopolitical milieu. The direct threat from European colonialism, coupled with the modern Western political institutions and values introduced through educational reform and modernization, created conditions for the rise of nationalist and independence movements throughout the Muslim world. While Islam acted as an important source of ideological symbols and common identity—due in part to the Islamic modernists' efforts to link Western political and basic Islamic concepts—modern nationalism was founded on a more secular orientation based on ethnic ties, tradition, territory, common language and history. Ethnic and religious minorities played key roles in this effort to limit the strict “Islamic” influences on these emerging ideologies. The triumph of nationalism (or more appropriately the exhaustion of the Europeans) allowed the Westernized elites to gain control of the administrative, security and economic systems of the colonial powers, but their new countries were beset with tremendous social problems. Furthermore, by pursuing Western development schemes, nationalist elites permanently altered the socio-political environment

of the Muslim world—in what eventually proved to be an unsuccessful attempt to promote legitimizing ideologies of progressive reform and development. (Esposito, 1992, pp. 62-63)

5. Failures of Western-Style Development in the Greater Middle East

Thus, in the early aftermath of independence, “conflict” with the West changed to a more competitive struggle centering on aspects of development. New regimes, mostly installed by the West and supported by westernized elites, began a process of “grand emulation” of their former colonial rulers; “modernization was imposed from above. . . . Individuals, countries, cities, and institutions judged themselves, and were judged, to be modern by the degree to which they were Westernized . . .” (Esposito, 1992, pp. 67-68). Nevertheless, most attempts at development were less than successful and this period of Western-inspired liberal nationalism eventually led to widespread discontent. This unrest was the result of at least two distinct factors: first, Western models of development “were adopted, not adapted” to the distinct environment of the Muslim world—creating the problems similar to the broader Third world; and second, despite general “lip-service” to religious principles, Islam receded from the political arena and could no longer play its former key role as an authentic and legitimizing ideology of mass mobilization. (Voll, 1983, pp. 42-43) Given such weaknesses, these modernization efforts were without the essential legitimacy and authenticity required for success. Most important, since the platforms from which the nationalists sought to develop legitimate governments and modernize their societies were centered on a concept—*secularization*—which was only “accepted” by the political elites and intelligentsia, the new regimes lacked an effective support base among the populace; this deficiency crippled their attempts at nation-building and socioeconomic development.

6. The Rise of Nasser and Arab Nationalism

As liberal nationalism faded, more radical ideologies rose to take its place; Arab nationalism or Arab socialism came to dominate the politics of most of the Arab countries. As old regimes were overthrown, new governments installed programs which emphasized Arab unity and promised the establishment of a new social order aimed at improving the

conditions of their societies. In trying to distance themselves from the two major development models—Marxism and Western capitalism—and seek a more authentic middle ground, James Bill states that:

[C]ertain Middle Eastern leaders have sought to develop hybrid models of political rule. These have involved elements of capitalism and Marxism adapted to local conditions and traditions: thus the creation of such ideologies as Ba'thism, an Arab socialism tinged with secondary elements of capitalism, Nasserism, another form of Egyptian socialism combined with pockets of capitalism; or Pahlavism, a form of Iranian capitalism with limited sectors organized according to socialist principles. (Bill, 1989, p. 128)

A key leader during this time was Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970); his initial platform of Egyptian nationalism, proclaimed after the July 1952 coup, was based upon a rejection Western colonial influence and previous policies of liberal nationalism and capitalist economics. As Nasser's reputation grew after his defiant stand against British, French and Israeli forces during the 1956 Suez crisis, he expanded his ideological platform to stress Pan-Arab unity and the region's common Arab-Islamic heritage. Arab socialism was promoted as the means to respond to the needs of the Arab masses—a third alternative to capitalism and communism, which would equitably distribute wealth and provide required social services. Despite ideological rivalries and challenges for Arab leadership from the Hashemite rulers of pre-revolutionary Iraq and Jordan, the Baathists in Syria and post-revolutionary Iraq, and the Saudis, Nasser was unsurpassed in his abilities to gain mass mobilization through charismatic leadership and anti-Western rhetoric. Moreover, he rose to a position of prominence throughout the broader Third World, strengthened by his creation of the Alliance of Non-aligned Nations with Indonesia's Sukarno and India's Nehru, and soon became a leading symbol of anti-imperialism. Nasser also championed the cause of the Palestinians, and focused the general anti-imperialist struggle of the Arabs on liberating occupied lands from the "European-American colony" of Israel. (Esposito, 1992, pp. 72-73)

While Nasser's Arab nationalist ideology recognized the interrelationship of Arab and Islamic history, the core beliefs were centered on a secular, transnational Arab identity. Eventually, the Islamist groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, withheld their initial support for the Free Officers when they realized that Islamic principles were not to hold a preeminent place in Nasser's policies of state socialism, and that he would not seek an "Islamic" state. Forced to confront both internal Islamic opposition and pressure from traditional regimes such as the House of Saud, Nasser skillfully manipulated religious symbols and identified the continuity between Islamic and Arab socialist principles such as social justice, equality and anti-imperialism. He coopted the religious establishment in Egypt, using religious scholars to legitimate his policies of nationalization and socialism. Despite his political skill in countering domestic and international rivals, the strong identification with the Palestinian's plight proved to be the most successful and, at the same time, the most harmful policy decision for Nasser and his regime. On the positive side, it was a source of transnational solidarity which provided a common cause throughout the Muslim world. It also furnished a vital external distraction from the lingering internal economic and social problems of the 'front-line' states like Egypt and Syria. However, the downside came with the disastrous defeat of the combined Arab forces in the 1967 war with Israel.

7. Soul-Searching After the Catastrophic 1967 War

The word defeat might actually be too mild for the total effect of the crushing rout of the combined Arab forces, highlighted by the loss of Jerusalem—Islam's third holiest city. It was a catastrophic blow to Nasser and the Pan-Arab cause, leading to declining support for secularly-oriented Arab socialist ideologies and a rise in Islamic activism. The Arab nationalism/socialism myth was shattered, and the failure of imported ideologies again confirmed:

Pan-Arabism proved incapable of transcending the diverse and often competing interests of Arab leaders and societies. Socioeconomically, Arab socialism . . . did not usher in the promised egalitarian Arab order or significantly

alter the plight of the masses. . . . Despite several decades of independence, imported ideologies and development schemes seemed to have failed. Old issues of identity, national ideology, political legitimacy, socioeconomic reform, and Western domination persisted. The failures of governments and national ideologies (liberal nationalism and Arab socialism), epitomized by the humiliation of 1967, precipitated a deepening sense of disillusionment and crisis in many Muslim societies and contributed to the political and social resurgence of Islam. (Esposito, 1992, pp. 75-76)

For the Muslim World, the years that followed the 1967 Arab defeat saw the secular trend of the nationalist/socialist governments begin to gradually change. After a period of introspection and questioning of core Islamic beliefs, Muslim elites and the broader masses began to acknowledge the power and potential gains from a revitalized Islam within their societies. Arabs begrudgingly admired the strength of Israel's political and military establishment, and pointed to the Israelis' persistent support of their Jewish faith as a central source of their power. A reintroduction of Islamic symbols and related manifestations was lead by Egypt under Anwar Sadat, as highlighted by the Islamic overtones and symbology employed in the mildly more successful 1973 conflict with Israel. Similar employment of Islam became even more pronounced by the 1980s—in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution in Iran—when a variety of regimes proclaimed an Islamic ideology to legitimize policies, mobilize mass support and strengthen their authority; such governments ranged from the traditionalist monarchies in Saudi Arabia and Morocco, to the theocratic nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the military-backed regimes in the Sudan and Pakistan, to finally the radical “state of the masses” in Libya. Even the professed secular basis of the Turkish state has been affected, and the need to acknowledge the pressures of the broader Islamic revival have become a regular aspect of government policy. Still, except for Iran, the primary feature of this period has been a limited display of true Islamic principles and *shariah* precepts by regimes, and an apparent determination to “ride-out” the stormy periods of development without initiating major political reforms—Islamic or otherwise—and simply biding time until better times can return. The paucity of forward-thinking elites and long-term programs

for comprehensive development in the economic, social, and political areas portends a continued potential "threat" from Islam as a key element of oppositional ideology.

B. THE REGIONAL CRISIS ENVIRONMENT: THE CATALYSTS OF ISLAMIC REVIVAL

The catalysts within this crisis milieu must be seen as both multidimensional and interactive (as well as highly specific to a local area as will be discussed in Chapter IV). Thus, while several broad categories of "crisis" catalysts and their impacts are discussed below, it must be kept in mind that combinations of these factors are typical (in various local "varieties") and will act to compound the detrimental effects of such conditions.

1. Cyclic Failures Ideology in the Greater Middle East

The first of these "catalysts" is the regular pattern of failures among ideologies across the region. As previously discussed, within the concept of ideologies there are a number of dynamic factors which lead to a regular succession of ideologies over time, such as generational change, crises, etc. An important element in this factor is what Salem calls "the 'anti' aspect of ideological change," namely that successful ideologies are strongly influenced by the ideology which previously dominated society at large. In the "age of ideology" under study, the succession of ideologies in the period can easily be understood as being fueled by "waves" of opposition to previous failed ideologies:

In the 1940s and 1950s, revolutionary pan-Arab nationalism arose in opposition to the rather conservative nationalism of the 1920s and 1930s [which had previously opposed colonialism]. . . In the late 1960s and 1970s, religion was offered in opposition to Arab nationalism. (Salem, 1994, p. 27)

The initial euphoria of the independence period was soon crushed by the hard facts of transitional society. Modernizing elites, espousing Western versions of liberal nationalism, soon shifted from leaders of "hoped-for" social change to the major part of the problem. The difficulties of overcoming the aftereffects of colonialism overwhelmed them, and continued

economic malaise left them with little concrete power behind the symbolic, "rootless" notions of "the nation" and "liberty" under a secular system.

The frantic rise of Arab nationalism, so closely associated with Nasser, surged to "great" heights of transnational aspirations, but soon they saw both the icon and his vision as discredited by defeat and particularism. Various other attempts at development and socialization also failed to establish the critical link between ideology and the common cultural background of the masses, further hampering political development and exacerbating the "crisis" environment:

The social and political models adopted in the Muslim Middle east through the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s shared one common factor. In greater or lesser degree, they sought to emphasize the modernization side of the dialectic. Advancement in technology, industrialization, military science, communications, health, and construction was a major priority. Political change occurred typically through . . . military coup. . . . In all these cases the casualty was political development, as harsh authoritarian rule became the order of the day. Although these military elites did a better job in the politics of distribution . . . they failed to build institutions that would integrate the masses into the political process. (Bill, 1989, pp. 128-129)

The constant search for answers and a new vision of reality within the disconcerting environment of the post-1967 Greater Middle East led to a "return" to the faith of Islam—a comfortable fit for transitional Muslims lost in an uncompromising, turbulent world. (Husain, 1995, pp. 160-162) This dialectical relationship in the rise and fall of ideologies is also noted by Fouad Ajami when discussing the "intellectual" aspects of the "crisis" within Arab society, when he notes the pivotal trends leading up to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism including "disillusionment with pan-Arab doctrines on the part of critical populations in the Arab world" and "disillusionment with secularism." (Ajami, 1992, p.16) There are a number of additional factors that arise from associated discontinuities of transitional social change, which further influence the current appeal of an Islamic "alternative" to the "crisis" of the status quo. They include political and economic factors, military impotence, and a vast array

of socio-cultural considerations, all of which culminate in a psychological crisis at the individual level.

2. Political Factors: Legitimacy Crisis and Mis-Rule

A basic reason for the rise of political Islam has been the persistent failure of Muslim elites to establish legitimate systems of government and progress toward stable, modern "nation states." Given the difficulties of the early stages of the "state making" process, most governments in the Arab world must still resort to coercion in times of difficulty or unrest to ensure public compliance with regulations or policies. This legitimacy crisis can be directly related to the inability of secular ideologies employed by the political and intellectual elites to gain authenticity and to provide meaningful results from development efforts, or to promote social cohesion. Failures by the ruling parties to fulfill promises of social and economic advancement, and to meet the increased expectations of the people only added to their loss of legitimacy. (Deeb, 1992, pp. 52-55) The partial emulation of Western political models, combining certain aspects of constitutional norms and practices with traditional centralized and authoritarian power structures, was further damaged by the failure to develop an ideological synthesis which could gain mass support within Muslim states.

The inability to meet the challenges of "state making" goes deeper than simple legitimacy; Husain describes a series of related "crises" developing in response to the mixture of a variety of contemporary influences into the political development effort in most transitional states. These include a "penetration" crisis, in which the state is unable to adequately extend its reach to local levels; a "distribution" crisis, where government intervention to solve economic and social welfare problems brought on by high population growth, urbanization, etc., is ineffective; and the "participation" crisis, where the inordinate influence from Western political notions of popular participation in government clashes with the "state making" level of political development that most of these societies (and more important, regimes) find themselves. (Husain, 1995, pp. 166-172)

Several attempts were made previously to overcome problems of legitimacy and other areas involving politics and government through ideological political thought.

Ataturk's development of a secular model, stripped of lingering "externals" from the days of the Ottoman Empire and pan-Turkism, was closely associated with the charismatic Turk war hero and benefitted from strong Turkish nationalism—two factors most other Muslim states could not come close to matching. (Dekmejian, 1980, pp. 3-4) Nasser's eclectic fusion of pre- and post-revolutionary political thought, along with some Islamic principles, created a powerful ideology—transformed over time from Egyptian to Arab nationalism—which came the closest to success; however, its demonstrated weaknesses after 1967 and the fact that it was too closely linked to Nasser's own persona and charismatic leadership made it problematic Arab nationalism could survive his death. The great Egyptian leader had a major impact on the broader Arab world. By propagating a legitimizing formula which increased Arab unity, raised the political consciousness of the masses and infused the philosophy of Pan-Arabism upon an entire generation, he was a truly historic figure. Nevertheless, the negative impact of the ideology was a bitter pill for the Arab states. The high expectations raised by the Nasserite formula went unfulfilled, and the ideology soon created an even greater crisis of legitimacy once no proper heir could be found to fulfill his central role of charismatic legitimization. (Dekmejian, 1980, pp. 3-5)

Baathist political ideology stood in contrast to the Nasserite formula by focusing strictly upon Arab unity based upon a glorious past, maintaining a strict secularist stance that saw Islam as more of a potential threat than a tool for legitimization. Lacking the charismatic leadership of a Nasser, the rival Syrian and Iraqi regimes were forced to increasingly rely upon the military and security forces to retain authority. Throughout the rest of the Arab world, various 'local' legitimization formulas have been employed—some with more success than others—covering a range from traditionalist tribal and Islamic bases of support for monarchies, to authoritarian republics, or a mix of Islamic and socialist principles or even Marxism (as once seen in Afghanistan and South Yemen). While each system had—or continues to have—some limited success in the "state making" process, it remains to be seen if the required strength and flexibility exist within any of these local ideological constructs to meet the cumulative challenges of transitional societies. The

inability to create appropriate developmental strategies, coupled with the quantum increases in coercive and control capabilities, point to the great potential for further repressive measures from weakened, desperate rulers. (Dekmejian, 1980, pp. 5-6)

3. Economic Factors: Class Conflict and Mal-Distribution of Wealth

The political factors of this crisis environment have only been exacerbated by the failures of regime attempts at achieving greater "social justice" and economic development. The gradual change of the "pathways of economic life" seen throughout the modern era has created a situation where economic problems continue to mount throughout the Muslim world—with various influences such as corruption and elite ineptitude, high population growth rates, inflation, and poor strategies for mass mobilization in support of economic reform and comprehensive development efforts—existing in nearly every country. Disruptive occurrences have been felt in many states from the "side effects" of economic reform, as economic systems were revamped from socialist to capitalist-based schemes, and inefficient industrialization schemes were imposed. (Salem, 1994, pp. 8-9) Even the oil-rich states have been plagued with economic concerns, due to their lack of effective mechanisms to achieve a balance between increased income distribution and overall social and economic development. The problem of mal-distribution of wealth can exacerbate other underlying problems, both within and between countries—no comprehensive strategy has been yet devised to overcome this lingering problem. Again, Nasser had a major impact, by promoting economic policies in conjunction with his Pan-Arab political strategy which were labeled Arab Socialism. In a synthesis of "Islamic, Marxist and etatist principles," the formula of Arab Socialism promised great benefits to all Egyptians and adherents in the greater Arab world. However, as with most other economic models for the region, its promises and corresponding increased expectations went unfulfilled. (Dekmejian, 1980, pp. 4-7)

Even beyond the issue of a widening gap between the "haves" and "have-nots," frustration has mounted over more basic concerns such as unfulfilled promises of education, and increasing overcrowding of the cities. Rising unemployment and unavailable (or

unaffordable) housing are other issues which antagonize Muslims. As regimes fail to address such concerns over the long-term, the opposition will only gain strength and demand greater change from the ruling elites. Moreover, as economic problems grow and the conspicuous consumption and corrupt practices of elites continue, diverse groups within society will likely be drawn together and support political aims they might not otherwise have considered. While such groups will be unlikely to remain unified once changes have been made—especially after radical changes such as seen in post-revolutionary Iran—the potential strength of their oppositional stance is a significant cause of concern for currently beleaguered elites. Urban political violence is likely to be a regular feature of the sociopolitical environment for some time. (Ayubi, 1991, pp. 157-175; Richards and Waterbury, 1990, Ch. 10)

4. Military Impotence: Crises Involving the Lack of Security

Yet another factor expanding the Islamic world's crisis milieu is the continued burden of military defeats. A basic element of the Muslim countries' drive for independence was the objective of gaining sufficient military potential to defend their important territorial interests from external threats—an aspiration that has not only failed to be met but has been a source of outright humiliation for many of these countries. In the struggle for independence, Muslim countries—with the exception of the Algerian ouster of the French and the *mujahedin* "victory" over the Soviets in Afghanistan—were notably unsuccessful in waging military conflict with their European imperial powers. This futility continued after independence was granted, with non-Islamic foes repeatedly vanquishing Muslim militaries; key examples include not only the continued Arab failures against the state of Israel, but also Pakistan's successive defeats at the hands of India's military. While all Arab ruling elites suffered repercussions from these "crises to ideologies in power" (an approximation of Salem's concept), the greatest impact of these defeats—most notably the 1967 debacle—was felt by various Muslim military regimes, whose already tenuous legitimacy was further undermined. (Dekmejian, 1980, pp. 7-8) In general, states within the

region face “crises” of security involving both internal and external dimensions, a situation that is intrinsic to the level of “state making” that exists across the region:

[T]he regional dimension of conflict is often determined by the process of state making undertaken concurrently by contiguous states in the Third World. The simultaneous nature of this process, which frequently includes the assertion of political and military control over demographic and territorial space contested by neighboring states, underlies many of the conflicts among developing countries . . . there is a major and obvious link between the state making process and the regional balance of power. (Ayoob, 1995, p. 50)

Lingering concerns over security and the inherent instability of the transitional environment, both internal and external, create an atmosphere where militant Islamist groups thrive (i.e., Hamas in the Israeli-occupied and Palestinian Authority controlled territories, Hizbullah in Lebanon, etc.). (Deeb, 1992, p. 54) The second Gulf War also had a major impact, not only by the crushing defeat of the Iraqi military machine—the largest Arab military force at the time, but also by highlighting the continued vulnerability of the wealthy Saudi state and its smaller Gulf neighbors—which required the protection of the Western powers despite having spent billions of dollars on modern weaponry. The continued presence (and build-up) of U.S. forces in the region transmits visions of neo-imperialism and further enhances the feelings of military impotence. Conversely, the unresponsive attitude of the Western powers to the plight of Muslims in the Former Yugoslavia over several years prior to NATO’s current involvement suggested a double-standard in Western military intervention, and amplified feelings of despair among Muslims worldwide.

5. Socio-Cultural Factors: Identity, Spiritual and Cultural Crises

Corresponding with the increased strains typical in transitional societies and the break with the traditional roots of the past, Muslims throughout the Greater Middle East are experiencing a pervasive identity crisis. Attempts to develop an alternative identity system based on ethnic-linguistic or nationalist ties have proved mostly ineffectual, as only Islam is seen as comprised an all-encompassing framework suitable for Muslim society—including

religion (*din*), law (*shariah*) and state (*dawlah*) (Dekmejian, 1995, pp. 25-27); further information on these aspects of Islamic ideology are covered in the next section. While the existence of the state, and all that is entailed in its institutions and boundaries, is grudgingly accepted, the “mystical” qualities behind a national identity have yet to emerge. Competing nationalist ideologies have continued to stress secular principles and concepts, failing to “reach out” to the Muslim masses still feeling the persistent bonds of tradition. The identity crisis in transitional societies often heightens attachment to traditional beliefs and values, creating a general feeling of ambivalence toward modernity. The solution is a “satisfactory reconciliation of tradition and modernity” at the individual and group (for Islamists, the *ummah*) levels, and a new ideology must meet this requirement. (Husain, 1995, pp. 164-166)

The interaction of various aspects of the “crisis” milieu were only exacerbated by overt attempts to limit Islamic influences in past strategies for modernization and socio-political development. The Muslim identity crisis was only compounded when ‘internal’ attempts at social change were joined by increasing pressures from economic problems associated with ill-conceived development plans and pervasive influence of Western culture. The situation where native Muslim elites are “out of touch” with the masses highlights the multidimensional stratification of society:

The superficial Westernization of political and economic elites, coupled with their non-nativist behavior and conspicuous consumption, sets them apart from their less affluent and tradition-bound subjects. This has created a politically dangerous culture gap between the rulers and the ruled, which is exacerbating the ideological vacuum caused by the erosion of Pan-Arabism and the lack of a substitute ideological framework. (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 30)

The widespread clash between aggressive Western culture and the “suppressed” indigenous value system has created an acute crisis of culture that pervades nearly every aspect of every Muslim country, particularly in the “pressure cooker” environment of the major cities:

During periods of rapid modernization, . . . when the familiarity of traditional society is broken, a widespread identity crisis can ensue. People are uprooted

from their tightly knit rural communities and migrate to the cities, where many become victims of unemployment or underemployment, inflation, and unhygienic living conditions. Often these individuals arrive in the cities with high expectations; instead they find a world of excessive materialism, selfishness, and crime. The depersonalization, alienation, and frustration of the "urban jungle" disillusion them and threaten their security and identity. . . .[T]his identity crisis often draws them closer to the religion into which they were socialized as children. [It] acts as an anchor, alleviates their fears and gives them a sense of stability, direction, and faith in the future. (Husain, 1995, p. 165)

Thus, Islam is naturally invoked to respond to the spiritual crisis felt by Muslims essentially "under siege" from a variety of forces of change. One of the most pivotal forces is the impulse of secularization which affects the entire spectrum of socio-cultural issues; critical aspect involved include the problematic division of "church and state" and the typical "assault on tradition" incorporated in the idea. Attempts to isolate religion in the Islamic world lead to a direct challenge to the fundamentals of the religion itself, thus further destabilizing the identities and beliefs of Muslims in transitional society.

6. The Cumulative Psychological Crisis at the Individual Level

The central issue of a Muslim identity crisis, coupled with the variety of other "crises" noted, conjoin at the individual level to form a *psychological* "crisis":

For many [transitional] individuals, the lack of congruence between inherited orientations and the realities of the contemporary environment left them in a direct and unmediated confrontation with society, which engendered deep feelings of weakness, fear, and anxiety. Individuals experience social anomie as intense personal alienation from the social environment accompanied by feelings of helplessness and fear. . . . On the psychological level, they find the symbols and structures of the new society unfamiliar . . . alien and meaningless They are unable to derive a clear identity and role structure for themselves. (Salem, 1994, pp.15-16)

These alienated and disoriented individuals "are inclined to overcome their loneliness and alienation by forming hyper attachments to symbols and mass movements that can provide

them an identity, a role, a sense of self-worth, power and companionship." Thus, their receptivity to ideologies and ideological groups is quite high, as they use strong symbols and ideas to create an environment where transitional individuals can find relief from the strains of society and a new collective *identity*. As part of the collective identity, ideologies also provide solutions to the broader *moral crisis* created, providing solid principles as a basis for confronting the "cluttered and confused moral environment" of society at large. (Salem, 1994, pp. 18-19) The constant bombardment of new and greater amounts of information brought on by the modernization process, particularly through exposure to the mass media, modern education, and foreign influences, also creates an *intellectual crisis*. However, ideologies provide a solution here as well, as Shils (1968, 69) notes: "[A]n ideology is the product of man's need for imposing intellectual order on the world." The "simplification" aspects of the concept outlined in the introduction aid in providing a coherent explanation of reality. Finally, Salem discusses the most "threatening" aspect of the cumulative psychological crisis, the *crisis of aggression*:

All the crises [of the transitional environment] generate in individuals deep wells of frustration and bitterness. To keep this resentment from drowning individuals and shattering their modest stability and self-esteem, they must be presented with suitable targets for aggression on which to unload their hostility freely and healthily. . . . Indeed, all desperate people need enemies. Ideologues and ideological movements can play a helpful role here in identifying some person, group, class, nation, civilization, and so forth, as the source of evil against which all can vent their aggression. By situating the source of failure or defeat outside oneself or one's immediate society, one can maintain a reasonably positive self-image even in the worst and most desperate circumstances. (Salem, 1994, pp. 20-21)

Islam has a somewhat "built-in" external "evil" in its dichotomous notion of the "forces of good" in *dar al-Islam* (or the land of the Islamic community) and *dar al-harb* (or everywhere else). (Salem, 1994, p. 21) Additional key symbols and history will be included in the following section. In summary, this combination of common "catalysts" within a variety of local contexts created a "crisis" environment in which transitional individuals were left

to search for an alternative to government-led development, which was seen as creating more problems than solutions. So, the rise of political Islam, an authentic ideology that was powerful and garnered support across various levels of society in its quest for a new sociopolitical order.

C. ISLAMIC POLITICS: INTERPRETATION OF COMMON SYMBOLOLOGY AND HISTORY

1. Political Islam: An Ideological Response to the Crisis Environment

As has been shown, the general origins of the phenomenon of political Islam are quite similar to other ideologies of transitional states. Moreover, there are some indications that Islam itself may aid in creating an environment “ripe” for the growth of ideological political thought. Indeed, Salem provides evidence of an “intensified appetite” for ideology across the Muslim world, as each state struggles through the agonizing process of development. He holds that:

[T]he central role of Islam in organizing traditional political and social life gave a strong transcendental meaning to worldly affairs. Consequently, in the secularization and differentiation that characterize modernization, the need for political and social values with transcendental authority was felt especially strong in the Arab [and, by extension, the broader Islamic] world. This response [to the “crisis” environment] . . . contributed to the power and centrality of ideological political thought. (Salem, 1994, pp. 4-5)

Shils points to the more fundamental aspect that Islam itself, like any “intellectualized religion,” imparts an inclination within its particular “high culture” toward ideological beliefs:

An intellectualized religion provides the precondition for the emergence of ideology, since the former contains explicit propositions about the nature of the sacred and its cultivation, which is what ideologies are about. The fact that an ideology already exists serves both to form an ideological tradition and to provide a medium in which ideological dispositions can be precipitated by emulation and self-differentiation. (Shils, 1968, p. 69)

Thus, an inherent "ideological receptivity" exists within Islam that need only be prompted by bleak environmental conditions—such as those experienced by the states of the Greater Middle East since the time of World War I and earlier—to spark the growth of ideological movements. The genial basis for ideological political thought directly relates to Salem's "age of ideology," which is common to the entire Greater Middle East region.

2. The Relationship Between Islam and Politics: a Historical Perspective

Another aspect of commonality—and the basis of concerns over "threats" from Islamic unity—is fundamental relationship between the religion and the ideology of Islam: the common symbols, ideas, practice and history of the Islamic faith that all Muslims recognize and believe in. While there is little need to examine most of the aspects of religious practices in great detail, a brief survey of the historical relationship between Islam and politics will provide the appropriate information related to the specific phenomenon of political Islam.

While the totality of the Islamic belief system certainly pertains to politics, very little specific information is provided in the fundamental sources—the Quran and the *Sunnah* (traditions) of the Prophet—concerning specific matters of government and the "Islamic" state. This vagueness (and thus, ideological flexibility) provides Islamist movements the liberty of innovation and the ability to promote their own various interpretations of Islamic government. (Ayubi, 1991, ch. 1) As such, Islam's relationship to modern politics is unique; its divergence from Western norms leads to many contentious issues, with the ill-defined nature of Islamic statecraft and institutions being a central factor of concern. As Esposito explains:

The organic relationship of religion to all areas of life is viewed as distinguishing the Islamic community from Christianity as well as from Western secularism and communism. Islam is to provide the ideological basis for both individual and communal life, for state and society. . . . (Lacking) a specific, agreed upon authoritative model for an Islamic state, Islamic activists, organizations, and governments have had to address a number

of issues that include the nature of Islamic government, political institutions and international relations. . . . (Works of early 20th-century Islamists on) Islamic government and institutions tend to be sketchy, dealing more with general principles and ideals rather than specific details. (Esposito, 1991, pp. 282-83)

While the diverse nature of the ideologies that originate from this ambiguous foundation will be reviewed more in Chapter IV, it is important to survey some key aspects of Islamic history to gain insight into the general phenomenon.

The basis and inspiration for contemporary Islamic fundamentalist movements—the historical relationship of religion to politics and society in Islam—can be traced back to the very beginnings of the faith in the seventh-century A.D. The time of the Prophet Muhammad (who received his first revelation in 610 on the “Night of Divine Power and Excellence”) and the *Rashidun* period—the era of the first four, “Rightly Guided” Caliphs (632-661) who succeeded the Prophet as leaders of the *ummah*—serves as the model for Islamic ideology and institutions by which both modernist and conservative Islamic activists and scholars compare contemporary governments. Esposito defines several reasons why this period is seen as normative for Muslim life:

[T]he age of Muhammad and the Righteous Caliphs . . . is viewed as the time when God sent down His final and complete revelation for humankind and His last prophet, Muhammad. Second, the Islamic community/state was created, bonded by a common religious identity and purpose. Third, the sources of Islamic law, the Quran, and the inspired leadership of Muhammad, which provided the basic guidance for the community, originated at this time. Fourth, the importance of Muhammad's exemplary behavior (*Sunnah*) and the early practice of the community was reflected in the creation and proliferation of *hadith* (traditions) literature. These narrative stories reflect the extent to which the Prophet, his family, and companions served as models for Muslim life. Fifth, it is the period of the early companions, or *salaf* (ancestors or elders), that serves as the reference point for all Islamic revival and reform, whether traditionalist or modernist. Finally, the time of the Prophet and the early righteous caliphs was not only one of divine guidance but also one of validation. During this period, Muslims believed that the revealed message and Prophetic claims were realized and divinely validated in the full

light of history by the success and power which resulted from the near miraculous victories and geographic expansion of Islam. (Esposito, 1991, p. 11)

Thus, regardless of the ideologic orientation of Islamic political activists, the early history of Islam is an important factor of consideration; this is an example of what Husain labels the "historic" nature of Islam. "As a 'historical' religion, orthodox Islam, at least in theory, bridges the gulf between the sacred and the profane, the religious and the political." This can be distinguished from the "organic" nature of the religion, which sees essentially a merger of religious and social systems because Islam possesses both divine laws "governing every aspect of the Devout Muslim's life" and "a comprehensive code of ethics, morals, instructions, and recommendations for individual action and social interaction." (Husain, 1995, pp. 28-31) Both characteristics suggest at least part of the reason Islam clashes with attempts to modernize and develop Muslim societies strictly along Western lines—the concept of secularization is difficult to reconcile with the "historic" and "organic" nature of Islam.

Ayubi brings additional factors into consideration, focusing on the need for innovation and a greater variety of influences:

Given the limited nature of political stipulation in the Quran and *Hadith* . . . Muslims have had from the start to borrow and to improvise in the developing of their political systems, inspired (I) by the shari'a as represented in the Quran and *Sunnah*; . . . (ii) by Arabian tribal traditions and (iii) by the political heritage of the lands they conquered, especially Persian and Byzantine traditions. The influence of the first source was more noticeable during the era of the . . . *Rashidun*, . . . the second during the Umayyad dynasty [which directly followed], and the third during the Abbasid and Ottoman dynasties. (Ayubi, 1991, pp. 6-7)

Because these various influences play of a crucial role in the debate over the relationship between Islam and politics, a brief overview of some of the key sources providing for innovation in Islamic ideological political thought is warranted.

The Quran, the revelation of God's will for all creation, was provided in the seventh century to Islam's founder/prophet Muhammad—it is the literal living word of God. Obedience and submission (*islam*) to God's will, while actively striving (*jihad*) to lead a virtuous life and realize God's will, are Muslim duties. Man has been provided all creation as a divine trust (Quran - 33:72; 31:20-29) and is designated God's representative or viceregent on earth (5:55; 6:166), with a divinely mandated mission to establish and spread God's rule (an Islamic order). The principal vehicle for realizing this divine mandate is the Muslim community (*ummah*), and thus religious affiliation replaced tribal ties as the bond of Islamic society. The sine qua non of the "Islamic" state is the implementation of Islamic law (the *shariah*), which provides the *ummah* with a rigorous socio-moral code and also safeguards it from external threats. Islam is also distinguished from Christianity by the unity and totality of its view of the universal order and God's centrality as the source and foundation of all life. While specifically referring to Islamic monotheism, the doctrine of "God's absolute unity (*tawhid*), sovereignty and [the] totality of God's will for humankind" serves as political Islam's ideological foundation and implicitly provides the focus of identity for believers. (Esposito, 1991, p. 282) The teachings of reformist Shi'i scholar and political activist Ali Shariati emphasize this focus: "all human activities and relationships, whether political, economic, literary, or artistic, ought to be firmly founded on *tawhid*. It provides one, single direction and it guarantees a unified spirit for its adherents." (Sachedina, 1983, pp. 199-200)

In 622, when Muhammad and the early converts were forced to emigrate (*hijra*) to Yathrib (Medina), the *ummah* was established and Muhammad served as both religious leader and political head of state. He functioned not only as prophet and lawgiver, but also as commander of the army and chief judge, drawing authority from Quranic mandate: "Obey God and the Prophet" (3:32). In addition, the Prophet's exemplary conduct and outstanding character served as the model by which Muslims were to pattern their lives: "You have a good model in God's Prophet" (3:32). The *Sunnah*, or example and sayings of the Prophet, became one of the key sources of the *shariah*, ranking just after the Quran. Muhammad died

in 632 and, as most Muslims believe, failed to designate his successor or establish a mechanism to allow the selection of a replacement—much less describe any specific system of government comparable to modern designs.

In the tense period after the Prophet's death, his leading companions quickly came together and, following the *tribal* custom of consultation, selected Abu Bakr—Muhammad's close friend and advisor—as their new leader. Taking the title of successor or *caliph* of the Prophet of God, Abu Bakr served as political and military leader of the Muslims, and also held religious prestige symbolized by his leading of the Friday congregational prayer and his name being mentioned in the prayer. The second Caliph, Umar, sought to further clarify the selection of his successor and appointed an “election committee” on his deathbed to select his successor. Following consultation, Uthman Ibn Affan was elected and given the traditional (Arab) sign of allegiance (the clasping of hands which symbolized the sealing of a pact or contract). This solidified a pattern of selection of the caliph from the Prophet's tribe, the Quraysh, following consultation, election and an oath of allegiance (*bay'ah*). (Esposito, 1991, pp.7-8) Still, Uthman's family had been adamant foes of Muhammad and the early Muslim community—tribal factionalism and threats of rebellion soon reappeared, eventually leading to Uthman's assassination. Ali, the son-in-law and cousin of the Prophet, succeeded Uthman, but fared little better as a number of rebellions and separatist movements occurred or were formed during his brief rule, which concluded the *Rashidun* period. Of note, the subsequent murder of Ali, coupled with the martyrdom of his sons, Hassan and Hussien, are critical events in the history of Islam during this period, specifically because they fostered the separatist movement of the Shi'i (partisans of Ali) who believe in the right of hereditary rule of the family of the Prophet. The ensuing sectarian strife between the majority Sunni faith and that of Shi'ism has continued up to the present and has had a major impact on the Islamic world—yet another example of diversity within the Muslim faith.

Despite the great advances made by the Islamic world in the succeeding years, the *Rashidun* era is regarded as the “Golden Age” of Islam—it was the period that introduced the “model” for administration and organization of the Muslim community. The example

and practice of Muhammad became the pattern for governance of the Islamic state, with the caliph directly controlling political, judicial, fiscal and military authority. During this period, the process for administration of conquered territories was also developed, with the establishment of provinces, governors, military garrison towns, systems of revenue collection and distribution, and regulations regarding non-Muslims within the Islamic state. It is important to note, however, that while the symbol of Islam's "Golden Age" is widely revered, its specific meaning or interpretation varies and has been used to support a broad array of positions of Islamic activists and their governments, as discussed in next chapter. (Esposito, 1991, 10-11)

From the time of Ali's death until the end of the Ottoman rule after World War I, the Islamic world was ruled by a succession of hereditary-based monarchies which maintained the legitimacy of their rule by proclaiming fidelity to Islam and basing government on the *shariah*, rather than on descent from the Prophet or traditional tribal and Islamic principles of allegiance. It was under the "shadow of the [monarchial] state" that most of the "theorizing about politics . . . and Islamic political literature" was developed. Furthermore, it "seems to have emerged when the political realities it addressed were on the decline." (Ayubi, 1991, p.2) This situation, obviously in conflict with the state of early Islam, creates the problematic circumstances now found in Islamic political thought and the conflict of ideologies:

[A]n elegant and elaborate body of jurisprudence, and a formal theory of the caliphate . . . through monopoly and repetition . . . [became] altogether entrenched in the 'Arab Mind'. With the passage of time, subsequent generations have found it extremely difficult to distinguish between what was meant as description and what was meant as prescription [J]urisprudence has now been extracted from its historical and political context, and endowed with essentialist, everlasting qualities. Furthermore, the elegant body of jurisprudence has been elevated almost to the level of the *shariah* itself . . . The point is thus overlooked that this jurisprudence was in the first place a human improvisation meant to address certain political and social issues in a certain historical, geographical and social context. What is also often overlooked is that the main body of the official jurisprudence

fulfilled a certain political function by imparting religious legitimacy to the government of the day, which . . . was not generally living up to the Islamic ideal. (Ayubi, 1991, p.2)

This last point, of the legitimizing function of the traditional jurists, has a major affect on the Islamist ideologies of today:

The traditional jurists had forged a link between politics and religion by giving a religious legitimacy to political power. The political Islamists maintain that religion and politics cannot be separated, but because they are now in the position of resisting the existing State, not of legitimizing it, they are seeking the politicization of a particular vision of religion that they have in mind. To achieve this purpose, the contemporary Islamists are often inclined to be more innovative and less textual in their approach. (Ayubi, 1991, p.3)

Thus, far from representing a strict return to the sources or theories as defined by a pure fundamentalist definition, political Islam can be seen as a modern invention that actually disregards certain aspects of tradition. It improvises on the historical linkage of politics and religion, transforming the relationship and placing religion as superior to politics—the opposite of the traditional connection. Also, just as the traditional jurists did in the past, the contemporary Islamists improvise from the various sources to meet the requirements of today, typically reflecting a focus on local political, economic and social conditions.

3. Cycles of Islamic Renewal and Reform

Yet another aspect of the Islamic faith that provides the Islamists with historical precedence for their efforts is the persistent tradition of religious revitalization over the years, as reflected in the key concepts of *tajdid* (renewal) and *islah* (reform). The history of Islam shows a recognizable pattern of renewal-reform, with a unique cycle of revitalization typically occurring during “periods of intense spiritual, social and political crisis” for the Islamic community (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 8), or at the start of a new Islamic century—the Islamic year 1400 began in 1979. Individuals or organizations seek to reconcile a perceived disparity between the Muslim world’s current environment and the Islamic ideal by calling

for a return to the fundamentals of the faith. This broad tradition provides a foundation for the belief that movements of revitalization are an appropriate and necessary catalyst for “the regeneration of the authentic Islamic spirit,” thus providing significant justification for some of the broader aspects of contemporary sociopolitical activism. (Voll, 1983, p. 33) While the current “cycle” of resurgence is linked to this tradition, it differs from previous eras however, and must be seen in its own modern context. The phenomenon is a grouping of political ideologies seeking to solve problems of Muslim society within the contemporary socio-political milieu. Most important, previous reform efforts were usually focused upon confronting strictly *internal* problems while the modern situation reflects a response to a greater external challenge from the West—specifically, from the drastic effects that colonialism and modernization have had upon the Arab and broader Muslim world over the past century.

D. COMMONALITIES WITHIN ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS

To focus on the specific beliefs and agendas that are somewhat common to the Islamists—using Ayubi’s (1991, pp. 67-68) definition incorporating fundamentalist and neo-fundamentalist groups, and also traditional Islamic scholars who are politically active—across the range of regional countries, a brief examination of relevant aspects of the fundamentalists’ response to their contemporary crisis environment is furnished. (For general background on this section of commonalities—beyond specific sources noted—see also Abrahamian, 1993, pp. 1-38; Ayubi, 1991, pp. 214-238 Butterworth, 1992; Deeb, 1992, pp. 53-55; Esposito, 1992, pp.77-167; Hunter, 1986; Wuthnow, 1991; and Zakaria, 1988) Of note, Muslim fundamentalists, etc., can be distinguished from other groups within the broader Islamic revival and political environments of the Muslim world—expanding on Ayubi’s efforts—in a typology of ‘revivalists’ in the next chapter, in emphasizing the very diverse aspects of the phenomenon. Outside of its Quranic scriptures, Islam is far from monolithic; even the scriptures themselves offer plenty of room for a variety of interpretations and implementations, developed under circumstances reflecting the unique

character and individuality of various states and regions. Evidence is seen in the diverse nature of governments and their opponents in the Muslim World, as well as the general socio-political environments between countries. As such, this survey will provide a very general review of the commonalities among Islamists—and further in depth coverage of specifics will follow later. For now, François Burgat and William Dowell, while cautioning attempts to bound the phenomenon, provide a good starting point from which to begin an overview:

The innumerable modalities of behavior and of social and political attitude linked to religion in Islamic countries justify a certain prudence on the part of anyone attempting to make an inventory. Once the differences in origin and the hierarchy of relationships have been shown and the diversity of different national situations taken into account, nothing prevents arriving at a conclusion that the attempts which have been underway for a half century to bridge the gap that separates society from the State by reintroducing Islam, have in fact taken on forms that are increasingly coherent and more and more homogeneous. It is thus possible to make a first attempt at a systematic outline, and to propose therefore to define Islamism as *the recourse to the vocabulary of Islam, used in the post-colonial period to express within the state, or more often against it, an alternative political program that uses the heritage of the West as a foil, but allows nevertheless the reappropriation of its principal references*. Despite the diversity of their institutional expression, despite their different political situations (clandestine or legal, opposing or as in the case of Iran acting within the state), despite the diversity of their means of action (proselytizing in the mosques, social or political activism or even violence, etc.) And that of their social base, the Islamist movements as a whole can well be attached to the same historical matrix. (Burgat and Dowell, 1993 p. 41)

The common “historical matrix” that the Muslim societies have experienced—that of the Third World, colonialism, underdevelopment, etc.—and the “crisis” conditions with which their members are forced in confront form the essential basis for the environmental commonalities that exist between Islamist movements. Now a more focused review of political platforms they endorse becomes important, as well as the religious features of their ideologies.

As previously noted, Islam, much like other religions, provides a basic doctrine which specifies man’s relationship and obligations to God. Still, the literal Arabic transla-

tion of *Islam*—to surrender, or submit to—points to a deeper meaning: everyone and everything must submit to God. Many Islamists promote the notion of Islam as a *din* (“way of life”), emphasizing a total commitment and subordination of all aspects of a Muslim’s life to the will of God; the doctrine of *tawhid* provides the common basis of this comprehensive worldview. Moreover, Islam surpasses the basic level of most other religions and catechisms by denying a philosophical separation of “church” and state. This overarching relationship stands in stark contrast to modern Christianity and the Western political environment; the resultant description in the West of Islam as a “political religion” creates fears of a rising tide of fundamentalism confronting Western values and institutions. As the focal point of this section, however, the concern over Islamic fundamentalism centers around its emergence as a major new political force over the last two decades. A few general assumptions concerning the Islamism phenomenon within the broader Islamic revival are provided as a basis for further examination:

1. It is, first and foremost, a cluster of ideologically-inspired movements using a variety of interpretations of scriptural symbols and religious precepts to support political activities motivated by the same local societal problems of concern to secularists within the state environment.
2. It is a force capable of trans-national appeal—though it provides little unity of action among groups—and can be seen in societies with a wide variety of social, political and economic environments.
3. It is a powerful, thriving element within both Sunni and Shi’i schools, and is seen as more openly politically motivated than larger groupings of “revivalists” and adherents to “folk” Islam/Sufi orders currently flourishing in the Muslim world.
4. It is a highly diffuse force with different manifestations according to the time and place; it is not a centrally-controlled, monolithic or even a formally organized force, and typically mirrors the stance of the regime vis-a-vis its activities.
5. It is mainly a populist phenomenon, as opposed to an official (government-sponsored) movement, mirroring Third World activism against political elites in other regions; its religiously-inspired basis comes as much from regime

repression of other modes of political discourse as it does from a quest for authenticity in its attempt to provide a new framework for reality/strategy for action. (Amuzegar, 1993, pp. 127-135; Bill, 1989, p. 130, Hunter, 1988A, pp. ix-xv)

The two most important factors are the populist nature of political Islam—Ervand Abrahamian goes so far as to name Khomeini's fundamentalist ideology "populism" and the intrastate nature of most of its activities. This is a movement of grass-roots anger—from feelings of deprivation and alienation derived from the deteriorating environment—which confronts or opposes the official religious, as well as traditional governing, elites. By promoting a social thesis which stresses social equality and champions the have-nots, the Islamists can mobilize a constituency wherever there are dispossessed or oppressed Muslims. Another factor which is critical is their strong objection to any form of external influence or intervention in Muslim societies. The Western imperialist legacy, combined with a perceived economic neo-imperialism which has captured their countries' drives for independence and local autonomy in an increasingly international economic system, creates fuel for their activist efforts. The Western image has been further tainted by frequent regional intervention, typically in support of repressive regimes or in order to maintain "regional stability"—a term typically seen as maintaining a status quo favoring the interests of Western-oriented elites over those of the masses. (Amuzegar, 1993, pp.127-135; Bill, 1989, pp. 127-132) Despite underlying Sunni-Shi'i animosity, Khomeini's slogan from the Iranian Revolution of "Neither East nor West," coming from common underlying circumstances, has symbolized the outlook of a broader spectrum of regional fundamentalist movements:

The common threads that tie these movements together are their stand against the established ruling class, which they consider oppressive, corrupt, faithless, and aligned with the United States and Israel; their grievances against what they consider to be the imposition by the West and the United States of a neo-colonialist and neo-imperialist culture hostile to their native traditions; and last, their sympathy with the plight of oppressed and disenfranchised Muslims in places like Palestine, Bosnia, and Kashmir. (Amuzegar, 1993, p. 131)

Given the pervasive nature of the “crisis” environment, the multifaceted “attack” on cultural/traditional elements of Muslim societies, and the continued failure of ruling elites to solve mounting problems or to permit an increased political “voice” for the masses, Islam can be seen as less a cause of the current violent rage throughout the Muslim World but instead as an opposition “mobilization platform.” (Nuemann, 1993) Resisting the onslaught of “Westernization,” Islam also survives as the only available avenue for political expression of their grievances, due to state dominance and its repression of other forms of political activism:

The Islamists gain popular appeal by endeavoring to accomplish the very program nationalist regimes had devised but were unable to achieve—be it because of the regimes’ widespread corruption, their squandering of oil revenues, their reliance on the West, their more recent submission to International Monetary Fund strictures, or their persistent lack of interest in tradition. (Salamé, 1993, p. 23)

This statement ties directly to the notion explored earlier of successful ideologies incorporating aspects of their predecessor to provide some continuity of thought while advancing a new approach to problems.

As for the primarily intrastate nature of political Islam, Sami Zubaida surveys a wide range of aspects relating to the modern “nation-state” in Middle Eastern societies and determines that, while not as stable an environment as the West, the region still exhibits crucial attributes which indicate legitimate support for the state system:

[A] modern political field develops in all the countries in question in relation to the nation state but not tied to it; . . . the discourses, political models and forms of organization of this field assume a nation and a national state, even when they are opposed to it in favor of some wider entity; . . . this field is the product of cultural and technical processes of modernity; and . . . most Islamic movements and ideologies are part of this field. (Zubaida, 1993, p. 140-141)

Zubaida holds that assertions that pan-Arabic or pan-Islamic ideologies are widely supported stem from lingering cultural stereotypes and "Orientalist" thought patterns. By focusing on a non-existent essentialism within political Islam and the typically arousing rhetoric of Arab ideologues, such analysis fails to account for the actions of the majority of Islamist groups which—while seeking to change the state "in their image"—still support its existence and "measured" accumulation of power. As development/modernization continues across the region:

[T]he 'imagined community' of the territorial state extends ever further into the deepest rural and desert areas, where the people are ever more conscious of their dependence upon the territorial polity. This does not necessarily imply solidarity or loyalty to the state, but a heightened consciousness of the national dimension of their livelihood and their relations to politics, which is crucial in both loyalty and opposition. . . . [C]onditions [within the region] have produced mutual interests in the territorial state, and . . . it is at least the working concept for all the actors on the economic and political stages. The challenges to the territorial state, pan-Arab and pan-Islamic, have come primarily from elaborate modern ideologies worked out by intellectuals, but who have in practice pursued their politics within the territorial state. (Zubaida, 1993, p. 170)

In analyzing the most significant "outgrowth" of political Islam in terms of the nation state environment—namely the establishment of an Islamic Republic in the former Kingdom of Iran—Zubaida notes that all indications are that "the Islamic elements of the republic fit very well with the nation-state model," even some of Khomeini's "less than Islamic" additions to the "Islamic" state (as discussed in the case study of Iran in the next chapter). The revolutionary thrust, powerful as it was, focused strictly upon the overthrow of the Shah and took no actions (at least overtly, outside of rhetoric) against its neighbors (Zubaida, 1993, p. 170); it was the invasion by Iraqi forces that began the long conflict between those two states after the Islamic republic had been formed.

As for those groups working outside the "system," studies indicate the more *militant* variants of this phenomenon are but a small percentage of the fundamentalist "sub-set" (neo-

fundamentalists) of the overarching political Islamic “umbrella” of ideologies (more information is provided in the next chapter) that receive little support throughout society. While alienated transitional individuals may feel angered at the state, etc., many do not see violence as a means of positive change for society; examples of popular disgust at violent acts include routine occasions where Egyptians have chased down bomb throwers running from the scenes of attack and turn them into authorities. (Dunn, 1993, p. 76) These secretive groups are ideologically quite similar to earlier revivalist movements in the history of Islam, except that these groups often no longer feel constrained to work “within the system” that has failed to provide them the progress in social, political and economic spheres that they seek. In terms of their secretive, cell-organized nature—and their potential threat to disrupt social peace—these groups can be compared quite well to Western terrorist organizations such as the Red Brigades in Italy and the Badr-Meinhoff gang in Germany, which also conducted terror campaigns with limited popular support. Some have been prevented from potential participation by repressive regimes, and/or “radicalized” by repressive policies. In summary, such terrorist activity, much like related more peaceful political Islamic action, is less linked to “Islam” as it is to the “crisis” environment and the opportunistic efforts of militant ideologues to gain a few supporters to wage destructive campaigns of violence against the state. (Dunn, 1993, pp. 76-77)

Despite this overall diversity in means of action, all Islamists tend to exhibit a number of general characteristics which tie together the similar deteriorating conditions they face with their common proposed response:

1. They believe Islam is an all-encompassing ideology—with the Prophet Muhammad, the Quran, and *Sunnah* as essential elements—that provides an effective, yet ‘comfortable’ response to the wide spectrum of contemporary challenges.
2. They emphasize social justice and equality, with vague prescriptions for specific problems—“Islam is the answer” is a standard response; as regimes continue to fail in their efforts to solve daily problems, the power of the Islamist line grows.

3. They oppose repressive and corrupt governments, and organize an integrated social, economic, and political infrastructure to encourage expansion of their base of support—taking full advantage of the global impact of the drive for democratization/popular participation to call for change in their societies.
4. They denounce the intervention of external actors into their societies' internal activities, promoting an authentic, yet eclectic, "Islamic solution" to problems of society—many of which are perceived to stem from previous external involvement, either directly or indirectly.
5. Their members exhibit total dedication to their principles and are usually willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for them. While not all groups are messianic in outlook or militant in tactics, the absolutist, otherworldly bent common to their creed tends to reinforce their mutual fervent commitment.
6. They believe that an Islamic "system" is the only ideological system which can truly succeed in the Muslim world, permitting their goals to be achieved and returning Islam to its rightful place of prominence on the world scene. (Bill, 1989, pp. 131; Dekmejian, 1995, pp. 41-44)

Under this general framework, it can be concluded that the Islamists provide "answers" to each of the various "crises" previously outlined. Islam, as an ideology instituted into society through the *shariah*, provides principles and prescriptions that have been applied to most aspects of Muslim social life. In terms of legitimacy and the related inability of ruling elites to organize viable political systems, Islam provides a traditional system of legitimation which enables the Islamists to reject Western ideologies and institutions for more "authentic" constructs to direct political activity and foster social cohesion. As Islam remains the sole ideology that has not been tried and found lacking, it retains an additional appeal within Muslim transitional societies, for both regimes and the opposition:

[F]undamentalist activity is the only means by which dissidents of any sort can express themselves in most Muslim countries. Modernist and communist ideologies have been hampered by the contaminative association with past colonialist power or present neo-colonialist endeavors. . . . Islam . . . is the one area the colonialist powers could not or would not usurp. . . . To the extent that state ideologies of nationalist orientation have replaced the

colonial powers they succeeded, their exponents have secularized Islam, but not displaced it. The legitimization of nationalist leaders continues to rest in part on their efforts to depict the kind of rule they offer as constant with the true dictates of Islam. (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 32-33)

There are three points to discuss here; first, the Islamists hold much greater power in their ideology of opposition to regimes, than do those elites who attempt to strike back at the Islamists with their brand of “government” Islam—often supported by traditionalist *ulama* (more on this in the typology of ‘revivalists’); second, the statement of Islamic ideology “not being applied yet” obviously infers “in the modern era” as the period of concern; and finally, this “untried” method also comes with the partial exception of Iran—yet another reason the revolution and subsequent activities of the *Islamic* republic are so pivotal: their *demonstration* effect (Iran will be one of the case studies in the next chapter). Thus, the (Sunni) fundamentalists can easily say “Islam is the solution” and have greater support for their claim.

As for economic problems, social justice and equality are key tenets of the Islamic faith—“Gross disparities of wealth and privilege fly in the face of traditional Islamic maxims of communal sharing of basic resources.” (Dekmejian, 1980, p. 8) As class polarization increase and the region's massive poverty increase, Islam provides the basis for a potent ideological protest—promoting ‘socialist’ Islamic prescriptions which have basic religious sanction. As for the concern over military impotence, the military tradition of Islam and its rapid rise to world prominence within its first century of existence are so obviously a ‘part’ of the religion that they have helped add to its stereotypes and misperceptions over the years. The Islamists turn this negative effect into a positive opportunity, emphasizing concepts such as *jihad* (holy war, in this context), *ghazi* (victorious warrior) and *shahid* (martyred warrior in the name of Islam) to evoke great sentiment among the faithful. (Dekmejian, 1980, pp. 8-9) Ruling elites can also come to see Islam as a powerful motivational tool, seeking to redirect the rage of the people and propel it against external enemies. The notion of Muslims defending *dar al-Islam* (the land of Islam) is a central idea of the Islamic faith.

As for Islam and socio-cultural crises, the religion is so closely linked to the people's basic existence that it will always provide a firm psychological foundation amid a troubled environment. Islam offers unity, legitimacy and self-esteem for Muslims in the throes of an identity crisis, and provides an 'answer' to the problem of general alienation. The Western view that religion will (must) recede into the private life of society for modernization to occur will likely need modification, with Islam seen as an exception to the rule—for if development plans and modernization are to go forward throughout the Muslim world, Islam will almost certainly have to play a key role at least providing cultural authenticity to such efforts.

Who are the individuals most likely to respond to the Islamists' *da'wah* (or call to Islam)? The constituencies generated by the "crisis" environment and state action/inaction will vary according to a number of factors, including Salem's "dynamics of ideology" such as socioeconomic class, age/generation, etc., as well as from country to country. Nevertheless, there are certain similarities among members of these groups:

They are not the disenfranchised, the rural rabble that some social scientists have supposed them to be. They are upwardly mobile, urban transplants from rural settings, with a keen sense of social/cultural/religious disjuncture. It is through a charismatic leader that they are mobilized (Lawrence, 1987, p. 32)

As previously noted, the youth of transitional society are particularly "ripe" for ideological capture. The increasing frustration of youth who have raised expectations due to high school, college and university educations and an inability to realize their goals due to the problems of the (usually urban) environment combines with the psychological insecurities and lack of identity common to youth worldwide to form a potent mixture of alienation and rage. It is no coincidence that students with training in scientific and technical fields—so promising and full of potential upward mobility—are prone to join Islamist groups when they realize the lack of opportunity that awaits them in the job market. Dekmejian notes three reasons for this relationship, in which scientific and technical studies

confirm/strengthen their religious beliefs: 1) their “desire to catch up with the West” and overcome their industrial and military underdevelopment; 2) their “quest to master fields of learning . . . thought minimally to involve the transference of Western values to Islamic society”; and 3) “the attractiveness of the certainty inherent in the sciences as opposed to the analytical and speculative nature of the humanities and social sciences.” (Dekmejian, 1995, pp. 46-47; Ibrahim, 1980; Dunn, 1993)

Other key attributes—many related to the general transitional environment—of the members of the Islamist movements include the likelihood that they are part of the newly urbanized society, with all its associated social, economic, and cultural shocks; often they are members of the traditional sectors of middle class/petite bourgeoisie whose religious devotion is increasingly turned into fundamentalist activities out of fear for the state of Islam in a world besieged by the powerful Western culture and political/economic influence. The lack of mobility provided by dismal economic conditions in regional countries only adds to their feelings of relative deprivation. Finally, there are the lower classes, which can be divided into three groups—peasants (*fallahin*), tribesmen (*badu*), and the urban poor—but are often grouped together as *al-mustad'afin* (the oppressed). While members of this group are less likely to be involved in Islamist activities in the early stages of group development, should conditions worsen and civil unrest increase, these groups—especially the urban poor—could join the conflict, providing mass support and “cannon fodder” for the potential revolutionary seizure of power. (Dekmejian, 1995, pp. 47-49)

In closing, it must be emphasized that identifying the potential for an Islamist response to the pervasive atmosphere of crisis does not necessarily indicate that such movements can develop appropriate solutions to the myriad of problems they face. The example of Iran and its troubles since the revolution provide an obvious message to observant Muslim that the platform of “Islam is the solution” is not as easy as it sounds. Nevertheless, the appeal of Islam among the masses has been based much more upon the political (ideological) message rather than its spirituality and other-worldliness (theology); Islam can be presented as a powerful anti-establishment political alternative to mobilize

protest against poverty and deprivation. Until Islamists are given a chance to replace the eclectic Western-inspired ideologies of current ruling elites with their Islamic alternative, and actually demonstrate how their policies will address (or fail to address) the various problems plaguing their countries, they retain the advantage of an untried option that will likely retain a secure spiritual and psychological niche in transitional society. Finally, while the more militant ideologies of the neo-fundamentalists have yet to gain broad popular support, they remain an active force with an influence far beyond their "secondary" status. Recognition of the moderate nature of the majority of Islamists is crucial, and at least some tangible "concessions" to those elements who seek to work within the system must be made—or the risk of radicalizing a broader portion of society could result. Government actions, in this instance, can do more harm than good if measures fail to combine suppression of militant actions with positive reforms and dialogue with moderate elements.

E. POLITICAL ISLAM AS A "THIRD WORLD" IDEOLOGY

1. Common Third World Origins

A basic premise of this thesis remains that political Islam has common roots across the Greater Middle East—despite the greater importance of individual historical, social, etc. backgrounds of states—in the impact of development and colonialism that distinguishes the Third World from the First. While each state has individual experiences, sometimes even without "official" colonization, the similar experience of "late" development and state-building in the modern era creates a degree of commonality between the ideologies which arise—both those with religious tiers and without—in response to "crisis" conditions of their environment:

In forcing the matter, one could go so far as to disassociate Islamism from religion, and see nothing more in this religious vocabulary, which is intended to express an alternative political program, than the ideological logistics of political independence, the cultural prolongation of the ruptures born of decolonization. . . . [I]ndeed, it is true to say that Muslims are not the only one to turn toward the heavens to find a response which a secular state

refuses to provide for them. . . . The phenomenon might be regarded as universal It is "the revenge of God." (Burgat and Dowell, 1993, p.68)

It is within the dynamic of the North-South dispute that political Islam must take its place as simply another in a series of ideologies seeking to provide support to members of societies overburdened by the course of events which created their relative backward conditions. In seeking a way to cope and combat the forces within that environment that seem out of their control, these Third World groups are forced to respond on terms decided by the First World—in an essentially religiously-charged environment spurred on by the spirit of the colonial age—which have had a lingering effect over generations:

More than the return of God, the most perceptible dynamic at the end of the century is probably the return to the forefront of His once-forgotten sons of the South. But if the South is not only Muslim, the North in its overwhelming majority is certainly "Judeo-Christian." It is the vocabulary of its Judeo-Christian culture which has served to express the marginalization from which the "Third World," notably the Muslim, is trying to emerge today. . . . If mosques have had as much success as they have over the last few decades, it is much less because they speak of God than it is because the vocabulary they use to do so comes from the only place that resisted the cultural pressure from the North. In this case, the apparent "return to the religious" is far less concerned with the resurgence of the sacred in a secular universe than with the rehabilitation of local cultural references, political ones among others. (Burgat and Dowell, 1993, pp.69-70)

Politically-active individuals in Third World states, regardless of particular developments which distinguish their states from their similarly underdeveloped neighbors in the South, all experience the effects of being in an inferior status compared to the First World. The need to respond continues—just as it did under colonial rule—due to the prolonged situation of second-rate prominence on the world stage:

In the South, the colonial episode and its diverse sequels constitute the hard core of the conscience of each individual, even for those who have not lived it. . . . To fail to recognize it or to appear astonished by the fact that most of

the Islamist generation has not personally experienced colonization is equal to drawing the conclusion that a society's collective imagination changes completely with each generation. . . . In the South as in the North, the resurgence of religion in the systems of representation indeed reflects the difficulties of life in societies that have fallen prey to the questioning of values and categories that have dominated the century. (Burgat and Dowell, 1993, pp.69-70)

Such discussion further confirms previous analysis linking the "crisis" environment common to the Third World with the response of political Islam, among other ideologies of "the South." Comparison with another example of a "religiously-inspired" response to such conditions is an appropriate way to close this chapter.

2. A Comparable Religious Ideology: Liberation Theology

While modernization theorists and neo-Marxist scholars have the view of religion—especially Christianity—as being apolitical or non-political in the modern era, evidence exists that many religions are witnessing the growth of religio-political thought and related activities. An example for comparison to political Islam, further emphasizing the "Third World" roots of the phenomenon, is liberation theology—an outgrowth of the Catholic religious communities of Latin America and elsewhere that is a response to the typical quandaries of the societal environment in developing countries (as discussed relating to political Islam). Jeff Haynes describes some key features:

Central to the concept of liberation theology is the notion of dependence and underdevelopment, the use of class struggle perspective to explain social conflict and justify political action, and the exercise of a political role to achieve religious as well as secular goals. (Haynes, 1994, p.98)

These movements were seen as a socially progressive phenomenon aimed at overcoming the stagnant, indifferent hierarchy of the Church to engender a spirit of 'people power' to mobilize the masses. In so doing, liberation theologians endeavor to confront the problems of the day and the status quo, making positive changes in the "crisis" environment at the

local level through welfare and reform activities. Haynes notes the atmosphere in which liberation theology developed:

In Latin America, Christianity has been *the* province of the Catholic Church for 500 years. Rather like Islam in the Middle East and North Africa, Catholicism is (or has been until recently) more than just a religion; it is the dominant culture, with deep roots throughout the hemisphere. . . . What happened to change things was that the traditional (Catholic) order began to collapse under the combined pressures of modernization, Americanization, and urbanization . . . (Haynes, 1994, p. 96)

Liberation theology grew out of a situation where the formal institutions of the Church had grown "out of touch": with the plight of the faithful among the lower levels of society. The phenomenon evolved as a response to two factors:

The first was the declining ability of the Catholic Church spiritually to satisfy burgeoning populations enmeshed ever deeper in stultifying poverty and political inconsequence. The second was the degeneration of politics to a squalid struggle for power between the military and the political elites, on the one hand, and the guerilla groups and trade unions, on the other. In this deadly battle many people were the targets of political violence *from both sides*. (Haynes, 1994, p. 96)

The conditions of crisis were further inflamed by a general deterioration of the overall economic situation in the region, limiting or halting growth rates which had previously soared in the years since WWII, and thereby creating the ruinous increasing gap between increased expectations and decreasing opportunities. Within this "crisis" environment, a key element which led to the fostering of a "politicized religion" was the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) from which a series of reforms were initiated aimed at revitalizing the Latin-American Catholic community. Seeking to increase the number of clergy and focus more on improved pastoral action, the Church sought foreign priests to bolster the dwindling numbers of the native counterparts throughout Central and South America and minister among the poor communities. (Sigmund, 1990, pp. 14-21) Many of these new arrivals had

deeply held, "politicized" beliefs concerning "dependency, socialist or militant Christian ideas." As a result the 'worker-priest experiment' began, leading to the direct involvement of the Church in the development struggles of states in the region:

The theology of liberation grew out of the militant priests' direct involvement with the working poor . . . Aware that the Church seemed to be losing contact with the masses, particularly in the cities, bishops in many dioceses supported a plan for parish priests to take employment in factories and workshops in order to get closer to working people, understand their needs more intimately, and develop [an appropriate] ministry . . . For most worker priests, direct involvement was a profoundly unsettling experience in consciousness raising. Many realized the Church was alienated from the poor, and saw it as primarily an agent of pacification and co-optation since it made little effort to change social conditions or draw attention to the structural causes underlying poverty. (Haynes, 1994, p. 100)

As a central part of the new ideology which grew from this "crisis" milieu, the radical clergy drew concepts from an eclectic sampling of Marxist social thought and reinterpreted Christian beliefs and traditions to form the frame work/strategy that became liberation theology. A "third way" was sought between the two dominant ideologies of the West and East, and to these priests there was no dilemma in advocating Marxist-type reforms for society—because the starting point was from a need to "humanize" the masses (release them from poverty and degradation) before Christian values and beliefs could be emphasized. Thus, the process of "liberation" incorporated ideas of socio-political "conscientization" as well as spiritualization. Two key means of implementing their plans came in the form of the Church hierarchy's program of literacy training, such as the Brazilian Basic Education Movement, and the grassroots-level Ecclesial Base Communities (CEB), which were small groupings of 20 to 30 led by laymen centered around Bible study and communal action. While radicalized elements within the priesthood provided the impetus for the CEBs in their early emphasis on popular community action and self-help, these "peoples forums" soon rapidly expanded in numbers. Redefining the Catholic Church's role in terms of social

activities in many Latin American countries—a key contribution to their societies was the socialization and sense of citizenship provided to transitional individuals. (Haynes, 1994, pp. 101-106; Sigmund, 1990, pp. 23-27)

3. Political Islam and Liberation Theology Compared

Thus, some strong comparisons can be made between political Islam and liberation theology as two “Third World” religio-political ideologies responding to a collective “crisis” within their respective transitional societies. Political Islam and liberation theology are first and foremost, popular-level, often mass-based phenomena, composed of diverse groups of activists, that “radicalize” (or politicize) religion to counteract a lethargic, traditional religious establishment and its support for the status quo religio-political environment. Liberation theology also seeks to reexamine its heritage, and like the Islamists, liberation theologians have many problems with the notion of secularism and its effect on society.

We all know that the Christian West resolved the issue of secularism in the formula, “Render unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar, and unto God that which belongs to God.” Nevertheless, there remains a lively tension and a certain degree of ambivalence among all major Christian sects . . . about the notion of secularism. . . . The conflict within the Roman Catholic Church between the traditional hierarchy and priests in Latin America practicing what they call liberation theology is perhaps the most dramatic current expression of this tension in the Christian context. Liberation theology resembles Islam more than any other variety of Christianity because of the extraordinary range of its views on a plethora of issues which cannot narrowly be defined as religious. (Mitchell, 1987, P. 78)

They can take advantage of the opportunities presented by “religious sanctuary” in an otherwise sterile political environment, circumventing regime efforts to stifle political opposition, and also benefitting from links with similar movements in other areas, states, etc. Both start with a fundamental concern for the poor and dispossessed members of society—in particular the urban members under heavy strain from social change—and urge them to take action to improve their conditions. While the Marxist slant (Western ideology) of liberation theology differs from Islamism, the anti-Westernization rhetoric and concern

over maintaining cultural purity, along with their mutual focus at the religious "community"-level, further suggest the cross-ideological similarities of the two. In essence, they have both redefined their political environments, as both regimes and orthodox religious leaders are forced to shift their public stances on religion and politics closer to the "extremes" of these movements. Emphasis on laymen being actively involved in grass roots-level social and spiritual functions within the transitional environment is also a common feature. Finally, there is also a link in terms of revolutionary activity, with the Iranian Revolution comparing with the activities in Haiti, the Phillippines, and Central America of liberation theologians leading mass opposition efforts (Haynes, 1994, p. 107).

IV. POLITICAL ISLAM'S DIVERSITY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON POWER

While the survey of common aspects provided a good starting point for comprehension of the general phenomenon of political Islam, the main proposition of this study is that some of its most important aspects, paradoxically, involve its localized features and origins. Lawrence notes the local influences on the phenomenon and then points to the "unity" of its original sources:

[I]nstead of a regional, national or transnational [phenomenon, political Islam exists in] a myriad of local situations, each bracketed by a set of variables that determine the issues and actors of the moment. . . . [Paradoxically, the Islamists] are [also] interlocked through a shared perception that Islam, with a capital I and in the singular case, matters more than the several alternative ideologies that compete with it, and more than the several state structures that attempt to define, and so control, it. (Lawrence, 1987, p. 34)

Yet, the discussion of Islam with a capital "I" overstates the effect of this potential basis of solidarity among movements when taking a view beyond the bounds of the local areas, and diminishes the key influence of his "local variables." The key to the diversity of political Islam—indeed, to almost any religious ideology—is the potential to meet requirements of the local environment due to the extreme flexibility of interpretation of the symbols and ideas that compose the religion itself.

Building from the previous basis provided, this chapter will furnish an examination of the breadth of Islamist movements, and also related actors in the environment of politics and religious ideologies in the Greater Middle East. These conditions create an atmosphere where a wider range of actors influence religio-politics, as will be shown within a brief typology of Islamic "revivalists"—a description of a variety of ideal-type actors and their viewpoints on the conjunction of religion and politics from positions of power and

opposition. While the previous chapter provided some basic characteristics common to Islamists and provided insight into the membership of these groups, this chapter will explore the far greater aspects of divergence in terms of their creeds and programs for Islamic-inspired political action—some of the distinctive traits that distinguish these groups and their more prominent ideologues within the broader phenomenon. These differences, along with group perceptions of the “crisis” situation in their country and certain structural factors in regional states—which vary based upon diversity in levels of development, affect of colonialism, geographic/natural resource considerations, and unique socio-cultural and political-economic attributes—play a role in the development of a variety of ideologies and political relationships throughout the region, creating a *polycentric* character for political Islam overall:

Islamic militancy in each country has come as a response to that country's underlying conditions. In their ideological approach to statecraft and economic management, the disparate Islamic movements give contradictory and confusing signals. Some are in favor of free enterprise and global economic integrations; others find capitalism, free markets, and multinationals exploitative and unjust. Furthermore, while most groups favor the adoption of Islamic teachings and jurisprudence as the law of the land, few openly advocate the establishment of a theocracy similar to Iran's, and the exclusion of secular parties. (Amuzegar, 1993, p.130)

Beyond this simple evidence of diversity, further information will be provided to outline some general variations in “types” of ideologies promoted, and issues involving an “evolutionary pattern” that is characteristic of these movements. Then, a general look at regime types across the region and their various responses to political Islam—a factor with an obvious impact on the activities of the groups involved.

Next, in attempting to illustrate some diverse aspects related to this phenomenon, a set of case studies will follow, organized according to the general relationship between Islamic ideologies and groups that espouse them and the government in power within the

state. The first case study, labeled *Islam Gains Power*, surveys the “birth” and “growth” of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this case study, evidence will show that far from a monolithic essence, Islam—even among the Mullahs within the government—is open to a variety of interpretations and political positions. Reviewing the events leading up to and during the Revolution, and the subsequent consolidation of power by more radical elements within the regime, this examination demonstrates how factionalism in Iran has been a key factor since the earliest stages of drive toward an Islamic Republic—and still plays a major role in decision making today. In addition, those aspects of the revolution which make it atypical within the Muslim world will be explored. Next, a case study of Egypt will look at *Political Islam at War*, in the regional state that has had the longest experience with political Islam in the modern era, and currently undergoing a tense conflict between the regime and militant Islamist groups. A brief historical overview of the changing relationship between Islamist groups and the regimes will provide the backdrop for discussion of individual groups and their ideologies. Then, an assessment of the potential impact such groups will have on Egypt in the future will conclude this section. Finally, the last case study concerns Pakistan, a state created by the conflicting religious and ideological views of Muslims and Hindus prior to independence in British-held India. In *Coopted Political Islam*, analysis of the historical interaction between the various Islamist groups, political elites and the military provides insight into yet another manifestation of politico-Islamic interaction. Here, the Islamists have continued to “play by the rules” of the essentially secular “Islamic Republic” while being unable to gain power via the ballot box. Despite the prominent position of “Islam” as a legitimating overall focus for the state and its activities, the Islamists have not overcome local elements and traditional factors which play a greater role in determining political outcomes in Pakistan.

Such diversity not only refutes the notion of a single “Islam” as related to politics or other facets of daily life in Muslim states, but deflates the primary notion supporting the idea

behind the theories of Huntington and Lewis (noted in the introduction) that caution is warranted due to a rising tide of Islam across the region—creating the potential for a “Green Menace” to clash with its historical Christian and Jewish adversaries in the West. The chapter concludes with a review of evidence relating to the specific transnational aspects of the phenomenon which indicate linkage/unity of action among the variety of Islamist groups. Beyond Iranian “kin-ship”-style support of Shi’i groups around the region and inflammatory rhetoric aimed against Western powers and traditional regimes across the Gulf, little evidence exists of a renewed ideological threat to be contained à la communism across the Greater Middle East. Islam is first and foremost a “lived experience” for its adherents and, as such, its various “relationships” with each Muslim are focused on the daily life and the daily environment—and not merely a byproduct of the theological tenets of the Quran (i.e., Lawrence’s capital “I”Islam). As noted, the confluence of the range of specific “crisis catalysts” form the driving force behind individual interpretations of religious precepts leading to the development of an Islamic ideology to confront problems of social change. Most important, politics within Muslim states have historically varied greatly *in practice* from the theoretical “Islamic” state discussed previously. However, this extreme diversity and fragmented nature of political Islam—since it is due to the great adaptability to local situations—combined with the unity of “faith” in providing identities for transitional individuals and also the state’s removal of other vehicles of political participation/protest—ensures that as a phenomenon, political Islam will be a factor in the region for many years to come:

Because Islamic fundamentalism exists, and will continue to exist, as the only pressure valve in a turbulent, cruel, uncertain world, fundamentalist Muslims will find other successes—some minor, some major, all temporary—beyond Iran . . . (Lawrence, 1987, p. 34)

With that thought, the analysis of political Islam continues, with an emphasis on diversity across the Greater Middle East region.

A. ISLAM AND ITS IDEOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY

The Islamic legacy has proven quite adaptable historically and—much like the Judeo-Christian tradition—has been open to multiple interpretations. The religion of Islam, with its variety of powerful symbols and ideas, is an integral part of the culture of Muslim societies and can be “mined” for various influential elements to support the ideologies of political leaders or their opponents. Often, the limits of its capability and capacity for mobilization relate less to the ideology itself, and more to the ingenuity and skills of the leaders, and also how they develop and apply their particular interpretations of Islam: a variety of factors influence the environments of countries throughout the Greater Middle East region—the similarities of which were discussed previously—and generate an atmosphere conducive to the growth of ideological political thought. The very nature of the Islamic faith, however, when coupled with the range of its spread, presents both a vast and fertile community to base the establishment of Islamist movements upon, as well as obstacles to strong pan-Islamic tendencies based upon its individualized interpretations. Accordingly, the ambiguity within Islam concerning politics (and other issues) actually serves as a basis for diversity in beliefs and practice, contrary to the hostile character and invariably authoritarian structure of Islamic politics presented by “Orientalist” scholars and some Islamists. Such variance provides the Islamists and others great leeway to interpret an eclectic sampling of the authoritative sources and promote their own unique “Islamic” ideology. James Piscatori discusses these conditions, pointing out the key role of individual interpretation concerning *any* aspects of Islam:

The only definite things one can say about the term ‘Islam’ are that it is protean and imprecise. Every Muslim can agree that the profession of faith

... is an article of faith and not susceptible to differing interpretations; but as regards the meaning of many other principles and ideas, and whether they are beyond question and change, there is little agreement. The believer says, 'Look to the Quran,' but, like all fundamental documents, it is what the reader makes of it. Ask, 'Does it support polygamy or monogamy, socialism or capitalism, equality of women or inequality, birth control, parliamentary democracy?,' and the answers hinge on what one hopes to find. (Piscatori, 1986, p. 3)

While such scriptural interpretation is enigmatic in any religion, Piscatori asserts that Islam is particularly so for a number of reasons: The Quran encourages interpretation with its own statements that certain verses are "obscure" or "ambiguous," and that only God knows their true meaning (3:7); Systematic revisions (2:106, 13:37, 16:101, 22:52) became the basis for the theory of "abrogation" which not only allowed revision of revelations to the Prophet due to changing circumstances, but implied that the laws derived from such revelations were also subject to change. The pragmatic nature of the *Sunnah*, or example of the Prophet, not only supplements the Quran, but also justifies the wide variance of its interpretations—indeed, this flexibility is the very essence of Islam. As there is no mediator between God and man, Islamic legal scholars developed the concept of *ibaha*—which asserts that outside the Quran's specific divine commands, an individual has freedom of action and becomes the "arbiter of his own faith." Finally, Islamic jurists have used an alleged saying of the Prophet, 'Difference of opinion among my community is a sign of the bounty of God,' to support the diversity within Islam that flows from the exercise of *ijtihad* (independent judgement) and the interpretations of the various major Islamic legal schools. In short, Piscatori asserts that, given all these factors, one comes to the "inescapable conclusion: that it is nearly impossible to say with authority at any one moment what Islam is and what it is not." (Piscatori, 1986, pp. 3-5, 9)

B. A TYPOLOGY OF ISLAMIC 'REVIVALISTS'

Based upon Ayubi's "taxonomy" provided in the introduction, and the additional data previously presented on the phenomenon, there is a basis for further examination of the diversity of political Islam. To aid in this elaboration, Husain develops a somewhat similar—yet expanded—typology, which when viewed in combination with Ayubi's framework, will permit a greater understanding of both the "players" and "playing-field" as related to Islamism as a regional phenomenon. Given the character of the subject—both of these Islamic scholars acknowledge the imprecise nature of their classifications—there are some points of both "overlap" and disagreement between the two; an attempt will be made to reduce these points of dispute, and clarify the intended use of respective terms for this study. Any such typology is necessarily imperfect, as not only will comparisons across cultures and sociopolitical milieus be deficient, but various actors involved will often exhibit elements from a different "category," depending upon the time, issues and circumstances. Still, the taxonomy included below is organized in such a manner so as the diverse individuals and groups will be identified by the primary intent of their ideologies and beliefs, and major differences can then be derived from that basis.

While starting with the flawed term of Islamic revivalism to describe the comprehensive phenomenon (although with a more political-based meaning than compared with its use in this analysis), Husain takes a valuable first step by identifying the broader range of actors, or "*revivalists*," who have encouraged the all-encompassing environment from which Islamism originates; he succinctly defines them as "anyone who has contributed significantly to the revival of Islam." (Husain, 1995, p. 11) By using such an initially broad definition, he includes political leaders and ideologues that would not come under Ayubi's (or many other's) definition of an Islamist. In focusing on this larger group, however, Husain highlights how these other actors help create the conditions for Islamism to thrive within their societies and elsewhere—often with unintended consequences. He develops

four ideal-type categories—the Muslim Traditionalists, the Muslim Modernists, the Muslim Pragmatists, and the Muslim Fundamentalists—which with minor modifications will aid in this analysis of political Islam. It should be noted here that members of each of these groups display a variety of views and they use various approaches to promote their version of political Islam or support their policies with Islamic symbology. To portray the political manifestations of Islam as monolithic, or to describe anything but the most general ideological consensus between these ideal-type actors, is to misrepresent or misinterpret the nature of political Islam and Islam's broader relationship to politics across the region.

1. The Muslim Traditionalists

With a more puritanical and revolutionary ideology than the others, the Traditionalists include Islamic scholars and conservative activists, like the *salafis*, who seek to preserve the Islam of the classic period and subsequent historical eras—especially its laws, customs and traditions. Controversy over the proper normative period is often one of the more divisive problems separating the *ulama* from the Fundamentalists and other groups. As might be expected, Traditionalists often have a narrow, parochial vision of modernization and scientific advances, and are very concerned with the spread of secularization in their societies. While well-schooled in *fiqh*, or Islamic jurisprudence, they typically are ignorant of modern scientific theories and believe Islam provides all the necessary information to meet the challenges of the day. Likewise, they have little understanding or interest in the complex institutions and processes involved in modern government, and are somewhat naive to the realities of global interdependence and international relations. Their focus in most aspects of the socio-political environment is on application of *shariah* law, and the various principles governing social and economic interaction within Muslim society. (Husain, 1995, pp. 11-12, 93-94)

They reject the use of *ijtihad*—independent reasoning concerning issues of theology and law—and instead call for *taqlid*—strict, unquestioning adherence to the primary sources

of Islamic law (the Quran and *Sunnah*) and rulings of the great legal scholars of Islam's medieval period. Fearful of potential undermining of Islamic tradition and their corresponding social status, *ijtihad* is often seen as an assault on established religious values and practices. Some Shi'i Traditionalists support the right of certain Islamic scholars who have gained the stature of a *mujtahid*—a member of the *ulama* who has earned respect for knowledge of Islamic laws—to exercise such independent judgement. However, most adhere to a more rigid interpretation like the majority of Sunni Traditionalists. (Husain, 1995, pp. 11-12, 90-92)

Most Traditionalists also diverge from the Fundamentalist view on “folk” or “popular Islam,” being more tolerant of cultural and historical tradition's impact on religious practice and belief. They correctly believe that Islam is more than a collection of abstract and utopian regulations, and is instead a comprehensive, “lived” experience. Viewpoints on political matters are similarly divergent. Husain, like Ayubi, notes that most Traditionalists generally support the established order and are apolitical; with a fatalistic outlook, they generally are detached from politics, and when involved are often coopted by regimes in support of the status quo:

Belief that man could not conquer and control his environment led the Traditionalists, often considered as the spiritual guides of the Muslim community, to adopt a passive and scholarly orientation. In moments of crisis or during distressing times, they encouraged the *ummah* to seek refuge and spiritual strength in the omnipotence and generosity of God. This stance was challenged by the gross corruption and hypocrisy of politics and the decline of central authority. . . . In disengaging themselves from active politics and the worldly temptations of power and wealth, the Traditionalists sincerely believed that they were protecting the integrity and cherished ideals of Islam. Thus, they tolerated the de facto separation of “church and state” where none existed in Islamic theory or history. Sometimes they were co-opted and reduced to impotent passivity by shrewd rulers. (Husain, 1995, pp. 92)

Some *ulama* members become politically active at certain times, especially if they perceive “Islam” to be endangered or local conditions reach a critical point of social upheaval. Examples of Traditionalist *ulama* activities in the Iranian Revolution will be provided in a case study below. However, most Sunni *ulama* display a general “detached attitude” and a “reluctance to change” that is often seen as a significant weakness by Muslims who decry the “stagnation of the Muslim world”; this perceived “impotence” on the part of the Traditionalists leads many Muslims to seek guidance from more activist actors/ideologues on the political scene. (Husain, 1995, pp. 11-12, 80-94)

2. The Muslim Modernists

On the other hand, the Muslim Modernists, often called apologists or revisionists—or as Ayubi notes, *reformers*—display a combination of religious devotion and vigorous support for “modern” ideas of science and logic. Unlike the Traditionalists, they do not support the dogma of *taqlid* and instead seek to reopen “the gates of *ijtihad*” to permit the reinterpretation of Islamic beliefs and reformulation of religious laws to adapt to the modern environment:

The Modernists are devout and knowledgeable Muslims whose mission is threefold: first, “to define Islam by bringing out the fundamentals in a rational and liberal manner”; second, “to emphasize, among others, the basic ideals of Islamic brotherhood, tolerance and social justice”; and third, to interpret the teaching of Islam in such a way as to bring out its dynamic character in the context of the intellectual and scientific progress of the modern world. (Husain, 1995, pp. 11-12, 95)

Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), the “father of Islamic modernism,” is credited with generating the principles of the Modernist outlook. Concerned with the relative decline in his time of the Muslim world with respect to the West, he held that Islam could regain its strength through a greater acceptance of reason and a selective borrowing of Western science, technology and processes. Al-Afghani decried the “medieval mentality” of the

traditional *ulama* (Husain, 1995, p. 96), blaming them and their adherence to *taqlid* for Islam's backward state:

The strangest thing of all is that our '*ulama*' these days have divided science into two parts. One they call Muslim science, and one European science. Because of this, they forbid others to teach some of the useful sciences. They have not understood that science is a noble thing that has no connection to any nation, and is not distinguished by anything but itself. Rather, everything that is known is known by science, and every nation that becomes renowned becomes renowned through science. . . . How very strange it is that the Muslims study those sciences that are ascribed to Aristotle with the greatest delight, as if Aristotle were one of the pillars of the Muslims. However, if the discussion relates to Galileo, Newton, and Kepler, they consider them infidels. The father and mother of science is proof, and proof is neither Aristotle nor Galileo. The truth is where there is proof, and those who forbid science and knowledge in the belief that they are safeguarding the Islamic religion are really enemies of that religion. The Islamic religion is the closest of the religions to science and knowledge, and there is no incompatibility between science and knowledge and the foundation of the Islamic faith. (Al-Afghani, 1982, pp. 18-19)

Al-Afghani had a significant impact on a number of other Modernist figures who also sought to free Islam from the bonds of *taqlid*, highlighted by his disciple, Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905).

An extremely important figure in the development of modern Islamic political thought, Abduh served as a newspaper editor, as a member of the *Al-Azhar* administration, and later as Grand Mufti (the supreme religious guide) of Egypt. Well respected for his moderate and modernist outlook, Abduh set in motion a number of reforms, including changes in the Egyptian system of higher education and a reinterpretation of Islamic principles to revitalize the religion. Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935) followed his mentor Abduh and continued a mission of Islamic reform. He also called for the *ulama* to adapt their thinking and accept the need for *ijtihad* and a comprehensive reform of the

shariah. Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) and Muhammad Iqbal (1873-1938) were both very influential Modernists in South Asia, while Ali Shariati, an Iranian Shi'i, was a pivotal figure in the development of an Islamic modernist line-of-thought among Iranian intellectuals and student activists prior to the Islamic Revolution. (Husain, 1995, pp. 99-104)

The Muslim Modernists, while diverging from the Traditionalists in many areas, can be primarily distinguished by their knowledge of and exposure to Western ideas, and their corresponding belief that a selective application of certain non-Islamic beliefs and practices would be a valuable aid to Muslim society. In order to accomplish this task, they “imaginatively synthesize Islamic and Western ideas to produce a reasonable and relevant reinterpretation of Islamic thought with enlightened, cosmopolitan, liberal, and realistic perspectives” (Husain, 1995, p. 110). Modernists often focus on areas such as educational reform and upgrading the status of women in society in their efforts, as well as striving to bridge the various divisions and tensions between the *madhabs* (sects) within Islam. While the other groups may support the idea of the universal Islamic *ummah* and the notion of a Pan-Islamic version of political Islam, the Modernists go further than the rest in focusing on this idealistic goal. While Afghani was renowned for his pan-Islamic rhetoric, Shariati also sought to unify the faith and often decried the influence of Traditionalist thought which emphasized divisions within the “House of Islam.” (Keddie, 1981, p. 220) In seeking solutions to the problems of the contemporary environment in their societies, Islamic Modernists strive to reform the comprehensive, historic religion which they devoutly believe in and practice. While having an affinity for modernization and Western-style development similar to the Muslim Pragmatists, the Modernists’ religious devotion—and abhorrence of the impact of secularization that has tended to accompany these influences—distinguishes them from the pragmatic line-of-thought. Thus, the Modernists tend to “carve” for themselves a difficult task of pursuing answers to the difficult array of modern problems

confronting Muslim societies today, while facing fervent opposition from most of the other groups represented here. (Husain, 1995, pp. 107-113)

3. The Muslim Pragmatists

While Husain includes the Muslim Pragmatists within his broader category of revivalists, it must be stressed that their importance in the socio-political environment is most likely to be in aspects often seen as unrelated to religion. They are a minority within their countries, but are usually wealthy, wield considerable power and occupy positions of leadership in the government bureaucracy, the military, the media, professional associations and the business community. Members of this group are the least religious, and often are perceived as “unbelievers” by some devout Muslims. Although they are Muslims by name and birth and often have a significant impact in the political arenas of their respective countries, the primary reason for their inclusion here is that, while usually displaying a secularist outlook with little initial interest in political Islam, Pragmatist political leaders are often seduced by the power and potential of an Islamic ideology. Thus, based upon specific sociopolitical conditions and the unique requirements of their regimes, Muslim Pragmatists will—sometimes reluctantly—promote a version of Islamic inspired ideologies, further stimulating the broader Islamic revival and legitimizing ideological struggles within the religious and political spheres. (Husain, 1995, pp. 114, 122-123) Husain describes them as such:

Muslim Pragmatists often do not observe the ritual obligations incumbent upon all Muslims. . . . Despite their nonchalant attitude toward . . . their religion, they return to it in moments of personal crises or when they find it necessary to conform to social or political pressure exerted by devout Muslims. The Pragmatists are nonpracticing Muslims who subscribe to a liberal and eclectic version of Islam. Frequently, their faith is reduced to a few basic ethical, moral, and spiritual principles emphasized by Islam and other religions [Their] lax approach to Islam is decried by devout Muslims, who consider them “wayward souls” at best and “unbelievers” at worst. . . . Western educational experiences encourage them to view classical

and medieval Islamic doctrines and practices as anachronistic, reactionary, and impractical for today. . . . the Muslim Pragmatists wish to modernize their societies along the lines of Western societies, and they believe that secularization is not only inevitable but desirable. (Husain, 1995, pp. 114-115)

Thus, secularization of society that accompanies Western-style modernization is the key area of disagreement between the Pragmatists and other Islamic activists.

Typically, these opportunistic political actors follow a path of transition from championing secular nationalism to what becomes a more potent version of "Islamic nationalism." Key examples include Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat (1918-1991) of Egypt, as well as Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1875-1948) and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1928-1979) of Pakistan. Husain even adds Saddam Hussein to the group, based upon his use of Islamic rhetoric during Operation Desert Storm. It is true that Saddam was able to incite a populist Muslim response in various countries throughout the Greater Middle East at that time. However, Saddam's longstanding reputation as a "warrior against Islamic Fundamentalism"—highlighted by his initiation of war against the newly-formed Islamic Republic of Iran—coupled with his quick reversion to a hard line, secularist stance in combating the Shi'i and Kurdish uprisings after the second Gulf War, and the subsequent solidification of his authoritarian rule in the face of threats from the Coalition and the UN to his country's sovereignty—make it difficult to label him a Muslim Pragmatist at this stage (even using Husain's broad definition of a revivalist). The author himself states that "except for a brief period during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the [Iraqi] government has not permitted the mixing of religion and politics. Devout Muslim activists and Islamic Fundamentalists are called terrorists and are hunted down by Saddam's elaborate secret police apparatus." (Husain, 1995, pp. 114-115) Still, the example of the transnational potency of the Islamist ideology, even from an unlikely—or unbelievable—source such as

Saddam Hussein, is significant and provides testimony to the varieties of influential actors and environments that should be considered for analysis.

Sadat, on the other hand, was the consummate Muslim Pragmatist. As will be shown in the case study below, he was able to meet the tremendous challenge of assuming power after the death of the highly popular, charismatic Gamal Abdel Nasser by promoting Islamist organizations to offset the Arab socialist ideology his predecessor had instilled. To neutralize the pro-Soviet leftists, he freed Islamic Fundamentalists from prison, permitted religious leaders to take active roles within the government, and introduced compulsory religious education in schools. Jinnah and Bhutto were similar secularists who found a valuable asset in the ideology of Islam during the development and early formative years of Pakistan. Their manipulation of the symbols and ideas of Islam—which also will be discussed below—demonstrated the power of mass mobilization that successful encouragement of political Islam can provide. Of note, Jinnah initially hoped to broaden Muslim political influence and protect their minority rights within the soon-to-be-formed independent Indian state that would be under Hindu majority rule. Divisions between the sides eventually grew too great and he then promoted the famous “two-nation theory” as a basis for an independent Muslim state of Pakistan. Years later, when Bhutto was faced with waning public support for his secular brand of socialism and a national crisis of identity in the aftermath of the 1971 loss of the eastern portion of Pakistan (now Bangladesh), he quickly adopted a message which “injected a heavy dose of Islam” into his socialist programs and implemented Islamic reforms to please the masses. While less than pious in his personal life, Bhutto’s passionate espousal of Islamic causes led to an increased interaction with the rich oil states of the Gulf and an enhanced international stature for the country. (Husain, 1995, pp. 116-150)

In general, Sunni Muslim Pragmatists benefit from the fact that the *ulama* do not hold a privileged political status within their traditional beliefs, and are to be respected only for

their religious expertise. This situation is then expanded by the Pragmatists—in a dual emphasis that marginalizes the Traditionalists: They stress that, in personal life, all Muslims are responsible to Allah alone for their behavior and religion is a private affair; and in the public milieu, the Pragmatists hold that the *ulama* have no right to interfere in political, economic, international and non-Islamic legal matters. Still, at certain times, the benefits from political Islam are too great to be dismissed:

[D]espite their essentially secular worldview and their firm conviction that religion is a personal affair between man and God, Muslim Pragmatists often find it expedient to promote and implement Islamic policies and programs to capture the support of the Muslim masses. The Pragmatists' use of Islamic programs allows them to gain or enhance their legitimacy, integrate and unite their fragmented societies, and inspire and mobilize the people. (Husain, 1995, pp. 122-123)

Still, each example of the Pragmatists shown also provides evidence of the dialectical aspects of this opportunistic approach to Islamic ideology—while often creating an environment of increased Islamic fervor within their countries and beyond, these leaders were unable to control the powerful forces they unleashed nor could they maintain their new-found “Islamic” legitimacy in the face of a barrage of denouncements from the Islamist groups. Each leader followed programs which were opposed by religious ideologues among the Fundamentalist and Traditionalist groups in their societies. In summary, they were unable to capitalize on short-run gains from their appeal to Islam, because of the long-term problem of a failure to properly adapt non-Islamic concepts and ideologies—that formed the true basis of their policies—to the indigenous Islamic atmosphere. (Husain, 1995, pp. 148-151)

Before moving on to the more pivotal Muslim Fundamentalists, it is important to reemphasize the need for differentiation of ideological viewpoints such as this typology of ideal-type groups. While these various categories may seem somewhat rough, the lack of

hard distinctions in certain aspects between many of these group types—and the overlapping character of some of their social, cultural and economic agendas—are simply qualities that must be recognized and remembered during any discussion of political Islam. The ambiguity created in the environment of a general Islamic revival reemphasizes the need to focus on the political aspects of the Islamists' goals, activities and programs. Moreover, to truly capture the diverse (and even intricate) qualities of the general phenomenon, as well as to avoid the obvious negatives of grouping all Islamic activists in a limited, and naturally more threatening arrangement, any analysis must include a further differentiation within the general "subgroup" of Islamists between those movements espousing a more moderate approach (i.e., 'working within the system,' etc.) to achieve their goals and those neo-fundamentalists who favor a more militant strategy. Unlike Ayubi's Taxonomy, Husain fails to emphasize this critical consideration in his broad survey. To avoid this oversight, a distinction between Islamist goals and tactics must be incorporated in any attempt to better understand the multifaceted nature and the broad breadth of political Islam. Simply viewing Islamists as a unified whole possessing a strict, unwavering stance on any particular subject will merely increase the current problems of stereotyping and biased analysis.

C. MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALISTS: DIVERSITY IN IDEOLOGY AND METHODS

As mentioned in the introduction the term "fundamentalism" is inappropriate to describe the overall phenomenon under study here, however, there are elements within this broader grouping which they can logically label fundamentalist under the guidelines of scholars such as Ayubi and Husain, etc. The objections raised over use of the term are still a consideration, but as long as a differentiation is made as to the "subgroup" activities the term remains useful. For example, among scholars participating in a five-year "interdisciplinary cross-cultural study of modern religious "fundamentalisms" focused on determining potential "family resemblances" among these disparate movements, it was gen-

erally understood that religious fundamentalism is a reaction to a potential threat to a religious community's "identity." (Marty and Appleby, 1991, pp. xi-xii) Of note, the "findings" of this study—the Fundamentalism Project, sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences—are found in three separate volumes entitled *Fundamentalisms Observed*, *Fundamentalisms and Society*, and *Fundamentalisms and the State*. The first and third volumes of this set are used as references in this thesis. In Further discussion of the topic, they find that in order to preserve this distinctive identity, "beleaguered believers . . . fortify it by a selective retrieval of doctrines, beliefs, and practices from a sacred past," often modifying them or including "unprecedented claims or doctrinal innovations." (Marty and Appleby, 1991, pp. xi-xii) Despite claims that revivalists are 'Medieval' in orientation, by drawing from past religious experiences to fashion a response to today's problems these religious groups actually use their identity as an "exclusive and absolute basis for a recreated political and social order that is oriented to the future rather than the past." (Marty and Appleby, 1991, pp. xi-xii) While such generalizations do apply to these movements, a great degree of diversity also exists in their activities and rhetoric; care must be taken to analyze specific sociopolitical circumstances, plans/means of action and the indigenous qualities of the groups to avoid inaccurate or mistaken assumptions. (Marty and Appleby, 1993, p. 5) Opposition movements, which are the primary emphasis here, reflect this variety in a wide spectrum of organizations ranging from moderate groups such as the Jamaat-I-Islam in Pakistan and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in contrast with the militancy of the Egyptian Takfir wal Hijra, the Lebanese Hizbullah, and Indonesia's Commando Jihad.

1. A Typology of Islamist Ideologies

In yet another typology—a necessary distinction which further emphasizes the diversity of the phenomenon—examples this variety can be roughly grouped into four general types: Gradualist-Pragmatic, Revolutionary Shi'i, Revolutionary Sunni, and Messianic-Puritanical. The first type, the Gradualist-Pragmatic groups, includes the majority

of the Sunni Arab Islamists which are aware of the danger from following a revolutionary orientation and primarily confine their work within the legal bounds of the state. In this variant of the focused effort on developing an "Islamic" state, the "gradualist" approach centers on increasing religio-political consciousness within society and promoting the adoption of *shariah* laws. The Revolutionary types, both Shi'i and Sunni, are essentially modern developments which vary greatly from both sects traditional acceptance of the status quo and political quietism. While the most prominent Shi'i version of this category is the ideology of Khomeini, which eventually led to clerical rule over the state in Iran, most Sunni revolutionary groups reject such a situation and merely rely on clerical "support/guidance" for the lay leaderships' efforts. Finally, the Messianic-Puritanical groups are most closely associated with the "Orientalists" version of the "fundamentalists," in that they seek to emulate the example of the Prophet in strict adherence to lifestyle, mannerisms, etc., and thus are the most "anti-modern" of these types of groups. Again, the variety of groups that extends across this spectrum is yet another indication of diversity, and the need to focus on specifics before conducting analysis of the broader environment.

2. Patterns of Evolution of Islamist Movements

Dekmejian (1995, pp. 67-69) outlines an identifiable "pattern" in the life of Islamist groups—further indications of which can be seen in the case studies below—which develops relationships between five attributes of the organizations: the group's lifespan, type of leadership, size, level of militancy and political status. His analysis indicates that:

A high statistical association was discovered between small size, high militancy, clandestine status, recent nascence, and charismatic leadership. Conversely, a high statistical association was found between large size, low militancy, public existence, longevity, and bureaucratic leadership. (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 68; emphasis in original)

While much of these relationships can be seen as “common-sense,” such as the militancy/ clandestine correlation, this analysis at least describes a rough “road map” for the evolution of such movements, from small, cult-like groups of young adults surrounding a charismatic figure that meet/operate in secrecy to later growth into a larger, more moderate organization led by bureaucrats who favor a less-militant approach to achieving their goals. Further evidence of such a pattern of development can be seen in the case studies below.

D. ISLAMIC REGIMES: “MONARCHS, MULLAHS, AND MARSHALS”

This diversity of Islamic political thought can also be seen in the various regimes in power proclaiming an Islamic ideology, ranging from the traditionalist monarchies in Saudi Arabia and Morocco, to the theocratic nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the military-backed regimes in the Sudan and Pakistan, to finally the radical “state of the masses” in Libya. Ibrahim Karawan (1992) discusses this great range of “Islamic” governance in an article from which the title of this section is borrowed. He notes how not only do the bases for legitimization by the regimes involved vary, but also that each has come under “attack” on religious grounds by political rivals within the national environment. Several important factors can be drawn from this usage of Islam a legitimation device—similar to conclusions drawn from analysis of development and its impact on transitional societies—namely that the political beliefs/programs of individual leaders, and the relative power and resources at their command, are the most important determinants of the transitional state’s sociopolitical environment. As such, these same factors will go a long way in determining the nature of the Islamic “threat” to their regimes. Should regimes opt for repression as a means to quell opposition, a radicalization of some elements and at least a politicization of a broader group is likely. Conversely, attempts to incorporate Moderate elements from the Islamist movement will likely lead to a fragmentation among the groups and a marginalization of the more radical factions. Efforts to move toward democracy, and include Islamists within the

state's structure, not only legitimizes the political system but also exposes the Islamists' actions to public scrutiny—the determination of whether “Islam is a *sufficient* answer” in the contemporary transitional environment is open to direct question, rather than simple speculation. With this general overview of the regimes and opponents that promote their versions of Islam both within the national environment (the majority, as Zubaida has stated) and outside the “bounds of the state,” analysis can turn to specific case studies to provide greater depth of information into the phenomenon of political Islam.

E. ISLAMISTS GAIN POWER: THE UNIQUE CASE OF IRAN

The examples provided by the Islamic Revolution in Iran will indicate both the power of Islam to “bridge the gaps” between a variety of groups within society and mold them into a mobilized oppositional grouping which can threaten even the most powerful regimes. Moreover, once the revolution was a success, the continued interplay between various factions displayed the diversity of beliefs and programs which have played off each other throughout the past decade and a half in the Islamic Republic. The Iranian case can be distinguished as unique, however, due to the essential historical attributes of Shi'ism which presented a fundamentally sound basis for a radical opposition ideology with broad popular appeal. In addition, the charismatic figure of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was pivotal in providing a strong leader to rally the disparate elements of Iranian society together, to form a common effort of confrontation. Of note, while some elements within the Iranian clerical establishment will be labeled “pragmatists,” this key group should not be confused with the “Muslim Pragmatists” outlined in Husain's typology.

On 31 December 1977 during a state visit to Iran, President Jimmy Carter toasted Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi by stating: “Iran under the great leadership of the Shah is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world. This is a great tribute to you, your Majesty, and to your leadership, and to the respect, admiration and love which

your people give you.”(Bill, 1988, p. 233) Yet, in less than a year the country was in the midst of revolutionary upheaval, and by 16 January 1979 the Shah boarded a flight for Egypt and left Iran for the final time. In the interim, a coalition of opposition forces—representing a broad spectrum of Iranian society—had grown and slowly come under the *hegemonic* control of the Islamists. (Farhang, 1992, p. xi) While even the most rudimentary analysis of Iran would note the impact of Islam on politics and the ulama’s key role within society, this case study will initially seek to determine why the radical Islamic ideology of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini superseded various other ideological discourses within opposition groups in pre-revolutionary Iran and achieved the overthrow of the Shah’s regime. Though the clerics would undoubtedly have played some role, the premise of this study is that the ascent of more radical *Islamic* activism led by the ulama against the state, much less the rise of Khomeini as recognized leader of the revolution, was not ‘inevitable’ and was in fact the outcome of a unique conjunction of political events and socio-cultural factors that existed in pre-revolutionary Iran.

Revolutions are brought about by a combination of factors, with two general developments being crucial—namely a structural breakdown of the state’s political machinery or its inability to resolve a crisis situation, and the endeavors of opposition groups or organizations to mobilize people towards revolutionary goals that exploit the state’s political exigencies. (Kamrava, 1990, p. 51; Kimmel, 1990, pp. 220-221) Moreover, unless there is some concurrence between these two developments, with the opposition providing a political alternative to the weakened regime, a true revolution—which entails displacement of a political system—cannot occur. In addition, to be successful the revolutionary leaders must develop and propagate an ideology that not only appeals to the public’s cognitive processes as it attempts to respond to immediate conditions but also causes the public to willfully permit its manipulation in the hopes of bringing about key sociopolitical changes. As a reminder of the introductory section on ideologies, they are understood to be a highly

articulated *strategy for action* that provides a cultural model outlining how human beings should live and act. Also, they are a product of the broader *socio-cultural environment*, taking into account meaning systems, social outlooks, cultural practices, and—most importantly—the prerevolutionary regime's prevailing ideology, within what Farideh Farhi (1990, pp. 83-84) describes as a “dynamic, ongoing social process”—similar to assertions by Salem noted above. Third, as ideologies are generated by a *cognitive process* through which subjects are created and transformed by human actions, they must be seen as readily changing and subject to “the willful actions of more or less knowledgeable actors.” (Farhi, 1990, pp. 83-84) Finally, while an ideology does outline a specific plan of action and cultural model for the future as envisioned by the revolutionary leadership, it is the *perception* of the ideology within the minds of the various individuals within society that has the greatest impact on its potential for widespread appeal.

1. The Weakened Pahlavi State

Though being one of the two ‘crucial developments’ required for a revolution, the factors involving the decline of the Shah's regime have been well documented and thus will be reviewed quite briefly in this section. The Pahlavi dynasty, which was just over 50 years old by the time of the revolution, had not established deep roots within Iran. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi had been placed upon the throne after his father was ousted in 1941 by the Allied powers, and was only able to retain his position in 1953 in the face of rising civil unrest due to a CIA-planned military coup. Through harsh repression of the opposition, the Shah brought stability back to Iran over the following decade, only to have renewed unrest in the period of 1962-63 as he attempted to implement more liberal political and economic reforms. Still, his ‘White Revolution’ caught hold and Iran saw tremendous economic growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s—with concurrent impact upon its socio-cultural environment. An area that did not see positive growth or modernization was the political realm; here the Shah actually strengthened his autocratic rule, extending state control over

ever greater aspects of the people's lives while enacting policies that seemed increasingly arbitrary and antagonistic. In fact, Iranians were increasingly presented with the regime's apparent retrenchment, as in 1975 when the Shah abolished Iran's political parties and formed a single party—an action he had previously claimed he would never take—the Rastakhiz (Resurgence), which not only upset previous political activists but forced previously apolitical citizens to publicly affiliate with the royal political party. As political opposition steadily rose, economic conditions also worsened and resentment grew as the public's inflated expectations of improved standards of living, better jobs and educational opportunities were dashed; the effects of hyperinflation from the country's quadrupled oil revenues after the 1973 oil embargo impacted all members of society. Regime responses only exacerbated the problem, as the business community faced an onslaught of repressive measures and government projects were cut back. (Bill, 1988, pp. 15-260; Rubin, 1980, pp. 3-251; Bakhash, 1984, pp. 9-18)

This myriad of internal difficulties coincided with increased tension from abroad, including pressure from international organizations on such issues as care of political prisoners, and tension from the U.S. due to the Carter Administration's human rights and arms control campaigns. Seeking to regain the initiative, the Shah introduced some minor political and legal reforms while easing press restrictions. Political activists took advantage of this meager opportunity, demanding further reforms such as increased constitutional liberties and greater independence for the judiciary. As deadly repression of riots in January 1978 created a great cycle of violence and martyrdom involving successive mourning ceremonies and processions over the next several months, the regime seemed in a perpetual reactive mode—apparently oblivious to the revolutionary threat massing against it. This new phase of the unrest differed from the previous protests led by the intellectuals and professional organizations—now the ulama directed the opposition, bringing a radical bent to their mosque-based protest and demonstrations. Hesitant responses by the regime,

presented by a series of new governments from late Summer to the end of 1978, were seen as signs of weakness by the ever-emboldened revolutionaries. By then, Khomeini and the radicals had seized the 'reigns of power' behind this ponderous, yet potent force for change—the other opposition groups began lining up behind him in solidarity against the Shah's regime. It was only a matter of time until "turbaned mollahs occupied the palaces of kings" (Bakhash, 1984, p. 3).

2. Centers of Opposition

While the evolution of the opposition and its ideology of political Islam over the turbulent period of 1978-79 is described later, this section briefly reviews elements involving the revolution's second "crucial development"—the three primary opposition groupings in Iran during the Shah's reign: political parties and guerrilla groups, members of the intelligentsia and the ulama.

a. Political Parties and Guerilla Groups

One key political organ in Iran was the National Front—a coalition of several parties with liberal nationalist orientations which originally banded together to provide a non-communist alternative to the communist Tudeh party in the aftermath of World War II. It was formed in October 1949 when a group of political activists and intellectuals led a protest calling for greater regime accountability under the 1906 Constitution and decrying the lack of basic civil liberties within Iranian society. The National Front reached the peak of its strength in 1951 when its leader, Dr. Mohammad Mussadiq, became prime minister and a number of popular programs were initiated. However, his turbulent time in office, punctuated by the campaign to nationalize the British-controlled Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), soon led to the alienation of many National Front supporters and finally his ouster in a CIA-engineered military coup in 1953. Of note, Mussadiq and the National Front initially had the support of a broad range of political groups, including the Tudeh and the clergy—as represented by the Society of Islamic Combatants, headed by Ayatollah Kashani.

However, his refusal to cooperate with the communists and his uncompromising secularist policies led to the disenchantment of both these key groups. Moreover, the military, which had a strong loyalty to the Shah, never gave Mussadiq strong support; his efforts to neutralize the military's power only led to greater resentment among the senior leadership. (Bill, 1988, pp. 67-97)

Following the 1953 coup, the National Front was on the verge of collapse as its key leaders and many members were arrested; continued regime repression limited attempts to regain lost political momentum through the end of the decade. However, a second National Front was formed in 1960, drawing strong support among university students and the Bazaari merchants in the politically-charged atmosphere at the onset of the Shah's 'White Revolution.' With the regime crackdown on political activists in the aftermath of unrest following passage of the Land Reform Bill, however, the group again lost strength. Further problems arose due to disputes between secular members and those becoming increasingly interested in religious ideology, eventually forcing a split within the coalition and a new group being formed. This third coalition, which included the Liberation Movement headed by a Muslim Modernist, Dr. Medhi Bazargan, continued its anti-regime activities throughout the 1970s, primarily outside of the country. The Liberation Movement was particularly active during this time, sponsoring numerous lectures and debates on political topics within Iran and conducting an intense propaganda campaign outside the country against the Iranian regime. Additional endeavors abroad included the coordination of protests and other anti-regime activities of Iranian students and expatriots—primarily under its affiliate, the Iranian Students' Society (ISS), actions which were particularly damaging to the Shah in terms of his image with world leaders and the international press in the late 1970s. Many of the founders and leading activists of the ISS later became key members of the Khomeini regime. (Kamrava, 1990, pp.59-60)

An ideological rivalry to the liberal nationalists of the National Front came from another key political organization, the Tudeh Party, Iran's original and most important communist party. Formed in 1941, it attained a great degree of popularity due primarily to its strong anti-imperialist stand—a particularly favorable position within the turbulent socio-political environment of the postwar period which saw Iranian nationalism gain increasing significance. The group received strong support among urban Iranians and developed a robust organizational apparatus, providing the Tudeh with a monolithic character contrasting sharply with its ideological competitors in the National Front. The party's leadership primarily consisted of members of the intelligentsia such as professionals and university professors, while its membership base drew from urbanized industrial workers and later shifted to wage-earners and salaried middle-class workers as the economy's modernization grew. While generally supportive of Mussadiq and his nationalization campaign in the early 1950s, Tudeh members were never allowed to participate in his government, and in the end believed they had little to lose from his ouster. Nevertheless, the party's condition did not improve after the Shah's return and the subsequent clamping down on all political activists. Particularly wary of the Soviet-supported communists, the regime arrested many Tudeh members and others fled the country for East Germany and the Soviet Union. With most of its leadership in exile and lacking significant influence, the Tudeh languished through the period leading up to the revolution and was heavily infiltrated by SAVAK. The group was further hindered by internal strife and the eventual separation of a Maoist faction in 1965, which later formed the Marxist-Leninist Organization of Tufan (Storm). Tufan never achieved much significance, much like its "parent" Tudeh group, and played no noticeable role in the events of the revolution. (Kamrava, 1990, pp.52-56)

As both the Tudeh and the National Front were suppressed after the 1953 coup and again following the unrest of 1963, the heavy-handed tactics of the regime led to increased frustration among some opposition members who saw previously passive tactics

aimed at reinstating constitutional primacy as futile. Such disillusionment led to the spawning of groups with a more militant ideology—the guerilla organizations of the People's Mujahadeen Organization of Iran and the Organization of the Iranian People's Fedaiyan Guerrillas.

The Mujahadeen, founded in 1965, devised an ideology which synthesized Islam and socialism, similar to Dr. Ali Shariati, and promoted an argument that the Shi'ite culture of Iran provided 'great revolutionary potential.' They held that original Islam had been distorted in modern times, and what was required was a return to a *tauhipi* society—a society of unity between man, nature and God—in which Islamic principles would guarantee social solidarity. By concluding that the Shah's Land Reform Program had effectively altered Iranian society and nullified the revolutionary potential of the rural peasantry, the Mujahadeen focused on the urban centers as the potential origin of revolt. While the strength of the regime's military and security forces was imposing and limited the people's hope for victory in an armed struggle, the formation of a 'liberation army' to wage guerilla warfare and 'shatter the police atmosphere' was necessary to demonstrate the possibility of armed action. In line with these strategic goals, the Mujahadeen actually sent some members to Lebanon in 1969 for training under the Al-Fatah organization. A major setback occurred in 1971, however, when SAVAK was able to expose some members of the group and eventually arrest most of the Mujahadeen leadership. With its leaders unable to provide necessary strength and unity among the remaining members, a split between 'Islamic' and 'Communist' factions occurred in 1975 and infighting between the two groups limited their attempts to regain momentum. Internal discord, coupled with effective repression by state security forces, limited these groups to minor sabotage and assassination activities in the prerevolutionary period. Beyond these difficulties, the Mujahadeen were never able to effectively present their ideology in a cohesive format to the public; its membership was restricted to a limited number of university students and middle-class professionals, despite

attempts to propagate its ideology and increase its contact with the 'revolutionary petit-bourgeois.' In addition, the regime successfully countered the organization's propaganda efforts by characterizing the Mujahadeen as 'Islamic-Marxists' and provoking public suspicion of its activities. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 60-62, 64)

The other Iranian guerrilla organization, the Fedaiyan, originated from a secret communist discussion group in 1971 and also took urban guerilla warfare as a tactical approach to opposing the regime. Unlike the Mujahadeen, however, the Fedaiyan had no grand ideological program or doctrine under which it conducted its activities; it merely held that the party represented a 'revolutionary vanguard force' which used violence in reaction to the tactics of the police state. Again the efficiency of the regime security forces limited the development of the group as a major source of opposition, and restricting its activities to minor bombings and 'revolutionary executions.' Fears of penetration by SAVAK hindered recruitment by both the Fedaiyan and Mujahadeen, and limited contact with the general populace left them conspicuously out of touch with the contemporary political currents. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 62-64)

b. *The Intellectuals*

Yet another group which formed part of the opposition to the Shah's regime was the intellectuals. As is typically seen in most modernizing societies—where such individuals typically exert a high degree of influence—members of the intellectual elite voiced disagreement with the Iranian regime's programs and policies, and the social and cultural values which it attempted to promote. It is the individual's relationship to these social and cultural values that is the primary determinant of his position or stance within societal groupings; the more fragile a society's acceptance of values fostered by the regime, the greater role played by intellectuals. While not all intellectuals will oppose the political system or regime activities, the means of influence, association with the general public, and common aspirations of those who do is generally described as follows:

Through the utilization of ideologies, intellectuals elicit, guide and form the expressive dispositions of a society, thus either reshaping or reinforcing certain norms and values around which matters of social and political controversy revolve. Intellectuals speak against their society's dominant cultural frame of reference and choose deliberately to estrange themselves from the cultural superstructure. Such estrangement often arises out of the intellectuals' alienation from their surrounding environment and from other social groups with whom they cannot communicate and for whom they remain enigmatic and little understood. Social alienation and psychological frustration often lead intellectuals to be politically oppositional and to view themselves as the future leaders of a political movement. (Kamrava, 1990, p. 65)

While Iranian intellectuals did play a key role in the anti-regime activities of the late 1970s—actually creating the initial basis for the revolution—such ventures were nothing new and political activism had been building among this group since the 1960s.

One of the greatest contributions to the revolutionary movement provided by members of this group was the construction of a general doctrine of political Islam, which played a key role in bringing the positions of the intellectuals closer into line with the clergy. While somewhat divergent with the clergy on the specific character of reforms and their desire for a secular orientation to the political realm—which thus hampered a unified theoretical discourse—the intellectuals recognized the need for an authentic basis from which to challenge the social and political orders, and saw the benefits of an ideology grounded in the sound cultural footing of Islam. Among those intellectuals who helped the evolutionary process involving political Islam were a few key individuals truly represented to core ideals of this Muslim Modernist trend: Jalal Al-e Ahmad, Medhi Barzargan, Ali Shariati, and Abolhassan Banisadr.

Jalal Al-e Ahmad, a former Tudeh party member who grew disillusioned with the communist ideology, laid the original theoretical groundwork for the effort to 'politicize' Islam in Iran with his 1962 publication *Westoxication*. This intriguing social commentary,

which sharply criticized Iranian society and culture as beginning 'Westoxicated'—or dominated by Western culture and technology—became exceedingly popular due to both its provocative nature and plain, easily understood writing style. While *Westoxication* served as a "diagnosis" of the disease plaguing Iran, Al-e Ahmad wrote *On the Service and Disservice of Intellectuals* as a "prescription" for the "doctors" he sought to place society in the care of. Written in a much more 'complicated' style of writing, this book was not aimed at the broader audience but rather the key actors, the intellectuals, who had failed to fulfill their responsibilities to society. Alienated from the people and the culture of Iran due to their Western educational backgrounds, the intellectual elite must quit viewing Iran as a Western country and seek to develop solutions to the unique problems of society. While these two sociological works received the greatest attention, in a number of short stories Al-e Ahmad also pointed to the important role of Islam—and Shi'ism in particular—in overcoming cultural Westernization and reviving Iran's cultural and national identity. Nevertheless, he did not formulate a specific doctrine of political Islam, only going as far as criticizing the potential negative effect of traditional Shi'ite institutions and customs on Iran's future progress. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 68-72)

The longtime political activist and Dean of Tehran University's engineering college Mehdi Bazargan attempted to move beyond Al-e Ahmad initial efforts and sought to create the theoretical basis for an ideology of political Islam. Seeking to create a doctrine of "rejuvenated" Islam which could regain compatibility with contemporary Iranian culture, he saw the need for a "renaissance" based on Koranic doctrine to overcome the perversion of Islam from a "religion of action" to a source of retardation and misery. However, Bazargan did not compose an overarching theoretical work to illustrate and expand upon his ideas. Moreover, his association with Mussadiq and previous political activism—combined with the fact that his writings had much more confined audiences (primarily other intellectuals and politically minded students)—further detracted from his

recognition as an ideologue. Still, within the small forum available to Bazargan, he did provide at least some interesting criticisms and insights, and expanded further the view of Islam as an ideology for both technological progress and national independence. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 72-73)

At least one intellectual who agreed with Bazargan's recommendation of a "rejuvenated" Islam as the key to Iran's recovery was Ali Shariati, a noted teacher, lecturer and graduate of the Sorbonne. After leaving a teaching position at Ferdowsi University to join the new Hosseini-ye Ershad religious institute in Tehran in 1969, he was imprisoned along with many other of the school's officials when the regime closed the school in 1973. After a period of house arrest from 1975 to 1977, he was permitted to depart for England and soon after was found dead—reportedly of a heart attack, though SAVAK was widely suspected as involved. Shariati's main contribution to the development of a doctrine of political Islam is the argument that original Islam was a religion of *tauhid* (unity), or literally monotheism, which inspired revolution as a means for man to realize his divine culmination. Far from the *tauhidi* religion of Mohammad, contemporary Islam is no longer a comprehensive ideology; it has lost its revolutionary dynamism, become a tradition and been "depoliticized" to where it is only the concern of the clergy. As a demonstration of the corruption of Islam—especially Iranian Shi'ism—Shariati provided an extensive comparison of the Shi'ism as practiced by Imam Ali with that of the official Safavid Shi'ism initiated by Shah Ismail Safavi in 1501 that limited it to issues of ethics and jurisprudence. He made assertions similar to Al-e Ahmad in claiming that the intellectuals must overcome their detachment from society and assume leadership of the move toward the all-embracing society of *tauhid*; foreign 'isms' must be avoided, with guidance provided from their religion and Iran's nationality—the role models for the people should be Islamic personalities such as Mohammad, Ali and Fatimeh. (Sachedina, 1983, pp. 197-213) His criticism of Islam's grim state was not only crucial to the politicizing of Iranian Shi'ism, but was also part of a

dedicated effort to provide an alternative system of future Islamic government; he was joined with another individual tasked with developing this option—Abolhassan Banisadr—who, in Paris in 1962, agreed to collaborate with Shariati to achieve their mutual goal.

Also educated at the Sorbonne, Abolhassan Banisadr was born into a religious family and had been active in the National Front before going abroad. Continuing his anti-regime activities in France, he agreed to jointly work with Shariati by focusing on the theoretical foundations of a society to be established after an “Islamic Revolution.” As indicated by the titles of his key works—*Tauhidi Economics*, *The Manifesto of the Islamic Republic* and *The Main Principles and Guidelines of Islamic Government*—Banisadr provided the basis for a system of government, which he entitled an “Islamic republic.” Starting from similar position as other intellectuals, namely criticizing the influence of “Westernism” on Iran’s socio-cultural, economic and political conditions, he calls for installation of an Islamic republic based upon the principles of *tauhid* to regain national independence and overcome the ills of despotism and autocracy. Banisadr’s system of Islamic government centers around the premise that authoritarian institutions of control should be removed and political power shared among the masses. The government is always under the peoples’ charge, and is responsible for defense of the population and redirecting the economy to provide basic necessities and facilitate the transition to *tauhidi* society. To overcome to detrimental influence of Westernism, all programs affecting social or cultural and educational issues must be guided by Islamic principles. Thus, the development of an ideology which not only “politicized” Iranian Shi’ism but provided distinct programs for the implementation of an Islamic system of government was achieved. The next step was to gain support of the Iranian masses behind the effort to bring about a radical change in the Iranian state and society. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 76-77)

c. *The Ulama*

The opposition group with the broadest popular base that provided the eventual “deciding force” behind the revolutionary movement was the *ulama*. While this group’s specific actions and involvement in the revolt itself—particularly the role played by Ayatollah Khomeini—will be covered later, the precursors to the *ulama*’s rise to power amid revolutionary upheaval will be briefly covered first. Although the chief contribution of the intellectuals was to bring about the evolution of Islam as an active political force, some members of the clergy had also sought a reinvigoration of the religion’s political aspects while also attempting to overcome the stagnation and isolation of the *ulama* from the rest of society. In 1960, Ayatollah Merteza Mottahari, a professor of theology at Tehran University, began presenting a series of lectures to the Monthly Religious Society on Islam’s role in politics. Other politically-minded members of the *ulama*, including key figures in the revolution such as Ayatollahs Mohammad Behesti and Mahmud Taleqani, also participated in these activities. (Farsoun and Mashayekhi, 1992, p. 12) The Society went on to publish a monthly journal and a book, *Considering Leadership and Clericalism*, which recommended the clergy take more interest in temporal issues and to seek greater influence within society concerning communal affairs and individual values. The Society became quite popular among religious students and younger clergy members, but was forced to disband as part of the overall crackdown by the regime on the *ulama*’s political activity following the unrest in Qom in 1963.

The activist stance of the Monthly Society was in direct contradiction with the policies of Ayatollah Boroujerdi, the most prominent *Marja-e Taqlid* (source of imitation), who held that non-interference in politics would prevent political forces from disrupting the *ulama*’s religious duties. An active leader of the clergy since the 1940s, Boroujerdi was one of the most influential *Marjas* of modern times and played a key role in rebuilding and expanding the theological center at Qom—earning him the moniker *Al-*

Mojadded (the innovator). Still, his desire to remain within the recognized "limits" of the clergy, stemming from its "removal" from politics after the Constitutional Revolution and subsequent suppression by Reza Shah, had resulted in the *ulama* being seen as somewhat "out of touch" with society or backward in its outlook. (Borghei, 1992, pp. 58-62) Thus, it was not until Boroujerdi's death in 1961 that a situation was presented where some of the Monthly Society's proposals—including a diversification of the *ulama*'s area of expertise within Islamic theology (essentially the delegation of higher authority among other ayatollahs; Kamrava, 1990, p. 79)—might be considered and some of the clergy's lesser-known members could attempt to play a greater role in its overall affairs.

One of these little-known Ayatollahs, Ruhollah Khomeini, had not yet developed a strong network within the clerical hierarchy or major links to public supporters like other members, such as others like the eminent Ayatollahs Golpaygani, Najafi and Shariatmadari. Nevertheless, he had established a strong reputation among the clergy for his scholarship and piety, and for his belief the *ulama* should increase its role in politics. In addition, he was well-known for his interest in the concerns of the younger generations and his support of revising religious doctrine to meet contemporary requirements. As such, he had attracted a number of younger clergy and laymen who disapproved of the *ulama*'s backwardness. It was not until 1962, however, when religious elements played a key role in anti-regime unrest that the opportunity arose for Khomeini to enter upon the national political scene, and simultaneously place the clergy firmly behind the effort to politicize Islam in Iran. (Borghei, 1992, pp. 65-66)

Disturbances originated on 8 October 1962, when announcements were made of a draft bill for the Majlis granting voting rights to women and religious minorities, as well as removing the requirement of being a Muslim for qualification for candidacy and election. While secular opposition forces were uncertain of their most appropriate stance—having little against this specific (progressive) law but viewing any political victory by the Shah

with repugnance—the clergy wasted little time in decrying the bill as an intentional effort by the Shah to assail Islam and weaken their role in the application of Islamic laws. The religious leadership in Qom—including Khomeini—sent telegrams to the Shah and the prime minister claiming that the law threatened the very principles of Islam and began to attack the regime's efforts through the mosques. Eventually the government succumbed to the *ulama*'s pressure and repealed the law in November 1962, thus ending the first "round" of conflict with the *ulama* in that period. (Borghei, 1992, pp. 66-67)

The next period of unrest began in January 1963 when the Shah announced the "Revolution of the Shah and People," a program of politico-economic improvements with a centerpiece of land reforms. Again the secular political parties were unable to mass the opposition and the clergy assumed the leadership position. Gaining confidence in this new role from their previous victory, the *ulama* came together to protest the pending referendum on the regime's program; opposition mounted, with Bazaaris conducting strikes and student protests at major universities. The Shah struck back, denouncing the religious groups as "black reactionaries" whose followers were "a bunch of stupid bearded Bazaaris." (Borghei, 1992, pp. 71-72) Khomeini continued his attacks on the regime during this period, as part his lectures at the Feyziyeh seminary in Qom. In March 1963 security forces struck back, forcibly occupying the seminary and killing several students before arresting Khomeini. A strident campaign denouncing the government's actions soon led to Khomeini's release, but his continued criticisms of the government led to his arrest again on 4 June. This time the news of his arrest precipitated riots and anti-regime demonstrations in several major cities, including Tehran and Qom, in which several people were killed. Harsh suppression by regime forces ended the disturbances. Khomeini spent time in and out of prison over the following year and was eventually exiled on 4 October 1964. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 78-80)

While these events are seen as the emergence of Khomeini as an independent and progressive member of the *ulama*, in actuality it can be seen as merely a fortunate set of circumstances which allowed an opportunistic Ayatollah to advance further toward his long-term goals. He had long believed in the strength of Islam as an institution—with its vast network of mosques and influence throughout Iranian society—and understood the power it could generate if mobilized politically. Yet the clergy, as previously noted, had long focused on purely religious and personal concerns under the guidance of Ayatollah Boroujerdi. Khomeini knew the only way to alter the clergy's role was through the seminary itself—thus achieving a position of recognized leadership within the *ulama* was the key to his plans. Boroujerdi's death provided an opportunity to apply additional pressure on his colleagues for change, but he wisely avoided extremist positions to both avoid distancing himself from others and creating enemies. (Borghei, 1992, pp. 69-71, 76-79)

Evidence of Khomeini's cautious approach can be seen in his push for a common declaration from the *ulama*, engaging Ayatollah Shariatmadri and others in a unified attack on the elections bill. His calculated plan established links between the clergy and other political forces like the secular parties and some intellectuals, while gaining personal support from key Bazaari figures. His later efforts to politicize the establishment were bolstered by the "taste of power" provided by the victories of 1962-63, and he gained broad and active support among the younger clergy in his attempt to take a greater leadership role. Manipulation of these groups later gave him the force necessary to confront his competitors among the religious leadership, coercing them to cooperate or risk being an outcast. Most important, Khomeini carefully avoided exposing the differences between the factions of the clergy at that time, maintaining a solidarity which helped propel the *ulama* to the forefront of the protest movement, and avoided the infighting which had paralyzed its efforts at leading the opposition in previous periods of unrest over the last century. Though this crucial period actually strengthened the "philosophical" split within the *ulama*—with

some clergy deploring the tactics of Khomeini and the radicals—its unity was maintained while demonstrating to all the ability and skill of the traditionalist forces to energize the masses through the power of religion. Seemingly no regime observers and few of the intellectuals noticed this transformation—the focus of “political protest” through the period leading up to the revolution remained upon those secular activists and guerilla groups previously “under the regime’s eye.” (Borghei, 1992, pp. 76-79)

3. The Islamists Take Control

The preliminary phase of the revolution began within Iran as early as April 1977, when a number of secular political activists and professionals formed the Iranian Society for the Defense of Freedom and Human Rights, taking advantage of a relaxation of regime policies on political dissent. The reactivation of the Writer’s Association in June was even more unique—the previously-banned group’s readings became open political protest meetings. Criticism of regime activities picked up both outside the country, as expatriots and students demonstrated against “the Shah’s dictatorial regime,” and internally, where open letters to the press from the intellectual community decrying SAVAK brutalities and calling for the government to uphold the principles of the Constitution created an uproar. Key members of the hastily reassembled National Front also wrote an open letter, condemning the Shah’s single-party system and calling for restoration of people’s rights. One of the most significant events of the “formative period” of late 1977 was the untimely death of Khomeini’s son, Mostafa, in Najaf from an apparent heart attack. The incident sparked popular speculation that SAVAK was involved and Khomeini, who had “dropped out of sight” on Iran’s national scene over the last decade, reemerged as a mystical figure who was hailed as a crusader against the oppression of the Shah. For many Iranians first learning of his prior record of anti-regime activities, he began to symbolize the need for urgency in the struggle to bring change to their country. For his part, Khomeini continued his unceasing, “routine” attacks on regime policies, and gathered more and more coverage

in the relaxed atmosphere of Iran's press. In closing this discussion of the 'preliminary' period, however, it must be reemphasized that the early fervor for change was provoked by an outburst of criticism from the intellectuals; the secular political parties remained in a dormant state, key elements in the lower echelons of society—though increasingly unhappy with the declining conditions around them—had not openly vented their frustrations, and the ulama in Iran had yet to 'feel the fire' soon to come. (Menashri, 1990, pp. 18-24; Kamrava, 1990, pp. 88-89)

By January 1978, the regime pinpointed Khomeini as a focal point of anti-regime feeling and decided to launch a preemptive attack on his character through an article in the widely-read *Ettela'at* newspaper. The report accused Khomeini of exploiting religion for his personal goals and causing the deaths of innocents in the 1963 rioting. Personal attacks included claims of his being under the influence of the imperialists and slanders of his knowledge of theology. The *ulama* took these blatant slurs as an attack on the entire religious establishment and led rallies in Qom on 7 and 9 January, the second of which turned into a violent clash with police where at least six protestors were killed. On 12 January, Bazaaris in Tehran staged a strike to mourn the deaths, the first such concerted protest since the 1963 riots. Further riots on 18 and 19 February coincided with the end of the traditional Shi'ite 40-day mourning period and additional deaths occurred, launching a cycle of sporadic violence which spread to most major cities by the summer. At that time the "cyclic" nature had passed as rioting and demonstrations were nearly continuous from mid-June onward—fed by the furor over a variety of social and economic grievances, any event or significant date/anniversary could spawn a new protest action. On 19 August a tragic fire in an Abadan theater killed almost 400 people and galvanized the opposition, who widely ridiculed the regime's accusations of Islamists as the culprits. (Menashri, 1990, pp. 25-27)

The government's actions over this time was inconsistent, and somewhat restrained in light of the severity and magnitude of the unrest. Policies aimed at liberalizing of the

socio-political environment and gaining support both at home and abroad merely “blew up in the Shah’s face” as opponents took full advantage of the opening to blast the regime further. In keeping with previous policies, however, the regime made clear distinction between the clergy and other political activists—attempting appeasements of the *ulama* while cracking down on the others. The Abadan fire and resultant furor led to the change of government and the installation of Ja’far Sherif-Emani as prime minister. Initial steps at appeasement—restoration of the Muslim calendar, closing of bars and gambling houses, legalizing the formation of political parties, etc.,—were seen as an attempt to split the opposition, and were rejected initially by Khomeini who was soon joined by others in denouncing the measures. As demonstrations continued and strikes virtually shut down the country’s commercial sector during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, the regime was forced to institute martial law on the night of 7 September. The next day, demonstrators clashed with troops at Jaleh Square in Tehran, with heavy civilian casualties. With the entrance of the Army into the turmoil, the Shah had used his last remaining source of strength, and it proved to no avail. The incident at Jaleh Square quickly turned many uncertain Iranians into fervent revolutionary activists and gave the military a taste of the unpleasantness of killing people it was meant to protect. (Menashri, 1990, pp. 33-44)

The Shah, seeking to boost a badly damaged image in the international press, rejected further direct action against Khomeini, believing instead that his ouster from Iraq would lead to an exposure of his backward and primitive mentality in the West. In October 1978, the Iraqi government agreed to Tehran’s request and Khomeini was expelled to France. This proved a major miscalculation—one of many, both previous and forthcoming, by the regime—as Khomeini was able to use the increased attention of the Western media to great advantage, gaining a persona of piety and strong conviction. In addition, the Ayatollah’s asylum enabled the gathering of a nucleus of revolutionary activists who developed an impressive organization that quickly began to assume a leadership role in the revolt and

actively coordinate the activities of the protestors. This group also began laying plans for post-revolutionary period—again distancing themselves from most other opposition groups who were not yet sure of the regime's imminent destruction—which later allowed them to consolidate their hold on power amid the disarray of the more moderate "allies" in the *ulama* and secular political organs. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 89-91)

The remaining days of the revolution saw little change from this pattern of events—the regime attempted further policies of appeasement to no apparent advantage and the opposition followed the Khomeini line of holding firm for the ouster of the Shah and the installation of an Islamic republic. Even before the Shah had left and the triumphant return of Khomeini in February 1979, the radicals had won a great victory while realizing the benefits of a little luck and a dedication to achieving his goals. It also must not be forgotten that Khomeini received much assistance—and legitimacy for his plans—from other members of the religious leadership. As the various factors reviewed previously came into line and he rose in prominence, neither Shariatmadari nor any of the other ayatollahs sought to openly disagree with his stand—often providing greatly needed approval or endorsement for his actions or statements—and maintain a fairly solid front among the *ulama*. Besides the Bazaaris, the *ulama* were the only group which the regime had been unable to somewhat pacify or coopt prior to the revolution's preliminary phase. This independence, strength and unity, coupled with the plan of action implemented by Khomeini and his followers created a unique force that the regime had no hope to withstand by the time it realized its true adversary. (Kamrava, 1990, pp. 92-94)

The real key to the successful overthrow of the Shah was the ideological force which mobilized and unified the disparate forces of Iranian society to seek a change in the socio-political order. The revolutionary propaganda of the *ulama* was successful for a number of reasons:

- It was easily presented to a broad spectrum of Iranian society through the vast network of mosques and religious schools throughout the country, with particular receptivity from two key groups: the rural immigrants and the traditionally-oriented Bazaaris and middle class.
- It was an ideology that was seen as part of the basic cultural and social environment of the people, a key part of Iran's national character and, most importantly, the antithesis of the regime's Westernized and secularized approach that had "created" all Iran's problems.
- It became a symbol of Iranian self-realization and authenticity that went well beyond a mere strategy of political activism.
- Its language was easily communicable and held a distinct cultural advantage over the discourses of the other opposition groups. Moreover, it eclectically drew on historical features which not only identified Shi'ism as a religion of protest and sacrifice—dating to its very founding—but also placed the *ulama* in a position of leadership and strength within society and in relation to the political structure.

As has been shown, the ascent of the *ulama*—especially the radicals allied under the control of Khomeini—as the primary force behind the overthrow of the Shah was not "inevitable." The fortunate circumstances and opportunistic character of Khomeini, coupled with his charismatic leadership skills and dedication to a sound plan of action, created a unique situation that produced the remarkable outcome of the Iranian Revolution. The lack of an independent *ulama* class, coupled with the current absence of an opposition leader of Khomeini's stature/charisma anywhere in the region, makes a similar occurrence in the Arab world unlikely in the near term. Moreover, while providing a "demonstration effect" for Islamists elsewhere, Iran fails to provide an ideological center (see section on the "Green Menace" below) to support similar revolutions—there have been no comparable occurrences in other countries in the over fifteen years since the Islamic Revolution.

4. Iran as an Islamic Republic

Since the time of the revolution, Iran has withstood many critical events and crises, and through it all has managed to strengthen the Islamic "credentials" of the regime. Even more important, the regime withstood factional infighting both among the disparate groups of revolutionaries who banded behind Khomeini and within the ranks of the Iranian clerical establishment itself. Overcoming the calls by leftist groups seeking a Marxist orientation to the state and the demands by liberals and nationalists for liberal democracy, Khomeini and his more radical supporters among the clerics were able to install an "Islamic" government. The features of the Islamic republic include an eclectic gathering of Western political concepts, such as a parliament and political parties, but was highlighted by Khomeini's development/active role as *Vilayat-e-Faqih*, or guardianship of the supreme religious leader. Just as in the revolution and years prior when he justified a more militant approach to politics rather than the traditional Shi'i quietism of the past, he drew from Shi'i theory on political legitimacy and the central notion of the *Imamate* to develop the conditions where the *ulama* became the guardians of religious tradition. Khomeini was innovative and extracted portions of his legal justification from a range of Shi'i principles to formulate the basis for the country's government. *Shari'ah* law was instituted, school reform conducted, and religious matters gained relatively high priority throughout society. When compared with the previous regime, the militant Muslims and clerics who took control of the government have been similarly intolerant of political dissent and have limited political participation, forcing public "debate" into a narrow field limited to discussion of current policies. (Hunter, 1988B, pp. 265-269)

However, the most important aspect of political activity in Iran remains the ongoing "conflict" between more pragmatic elements within the government and those hardline clerics who refuse to compromise on their ideological beliefs:

One of the most remarkable features of the “rule of the ayatollahs” has been the degree to which this relatively small group of men, in spite of their many similarities in social origin and intellectual background, have disagreed on some of the most fundamental issues concerning the nature of an Islamic society and government, and have formed alliances and counter-alliances based on ideological affinities or political expediences. . . . [D]ifferent “Islamic tendencies” coalesced into two major camps, the “conservatives” and the “radicals.” . . . Iranian elite politics during the 1980s was a story of rivalries, shifting alliances and conflicts between these two factions. (Banuazizi, 1994, pp. 2-3)

While this tension is felt across various spheres of government activity, it is in foreign policy where the pragmatists’ attempts to develop a more moderate, less confrontational stance toward other states have been hindered by the actions and influence of hard line elements—at great political and economic cost to Iran. (Banuazizi, 1994; Hunter, 1993, pp. 181-205)

Without the charismatic leadership of Khomeini and the national-level distractions brought on by the long war with Iraq, the consolidation of the regime might have been more difficult and more emphasis placed on the role of popular forces in government. Major reforms were undertaken in other sectors such as the economy, social welfare, the legal system, the “moral” codes and the media. The primary focus of these efforts was the desecularization of Iran, an endeavor that was greatly aided by the ongoing war and the political weakness of non-clerical elements within the political environment. In addition, the clerics sought to downplay aspects of Iran’s “national” heritage that, while not necessarily secular, had been the major force behind the Shah and his father’s regimes popular mobilization efforts. This was a difficult task when the war had been underway, but nationalist sentiments were mostly refocused in an “Islamic” direction, and thus permissible. (Hunter, 1988B, pp. 265-270; Schahgaldian, 1989, pp. 9-10)

Major effort has been placed behind attempts to transform the economy and deliver social justice and equality to the *mustad’afin*, the disinherited, of society from their

oppressors, the *mustakbarin*—a view of society held by Khomeini that certainly permits great leeway in developing appropriate programs. Rural development, interest free banking, and redistribution of land were among the programs instituted, but the Islamic regime has failed to meet its promise of bringing social equality and prosperity to the majority of Iranians. Much of the blame can be placed upon the leadership, which has haphazardly implemented often poor planning, held rigidly to its ideology in the face of complex problems requiring flexible responses, and failed in many cases to enunciate clear policies in such areas as property laws and state involvement in the economy. Beyond these areas of focus much of the activities and doctrines of the Islamic republic have maintained a startling consistency with the Shah's policies. Despite fervent denunciations of corruption and abuse of privilege under the previous regime, much of the same activity has continued—or grown worse—under the clerical establishment's control. A massive black market has been so significant that a new class of rich "merchants" has been created, and similar distinctions in social position and economic level have shown continuity with pre-revolutionary Iranian society. (Hunter, 1989B, pp. 270-274)

In the area of foreign policy, aspects of Iranian nationalism are readily evident when the clerical-led regime interacts with foreign elements. National interests even take primacy over Islamic "revolutionary" activities, as more pragmatic forces have usually prevailed in foreign policy making. Still, other aspects show a distinctly new approach—reflecting the worldview of Khomeini which parallels his societal view, noted above, of "oppressors" and "oppressed"—when Iranian relations with foreign states are surveyed. To Khomeini, the superpowers were the chief oppressors, and their division of the world into Eastern and Western spheres of influence simply allowed greater influence and cultural domination of client states. Believing Islam was an alternative, he espoused the credo "Neither East nor West," a slogan which fit comfortably into the Islamic notion of spheres of peace and war, and into the Iranian national vision of being a focal point of foreign competition and intrigue

for centuries. In taking a militant Third Worldism-type stance, Tehran has donned the garb of a champion of the world's oppressed societies, driven more by pragmatic attempts to gain influence and establish ties than by strict ideological reasons. Politico-religious motivations have also played a role, however, primarily through support to Shi'i groups around the Greater Middle East and also through the activities of the Ministry of Islamic Guidance. This organization is responsible for Iranian Islamic "public relations," using sponsorship of clergy visits to Iran, religious scholarships for foreign students, and religious propaganda to spread Iran's message. Finally, there has been some effort placed behind "exporting the revolution," which is a direct reflection of the ideological split within the clerical establishment. While more pragmatic elements believe that such ideologically-driven policies serves primarily a negative end in isolating Iran and hindering its development, more hardline elements see this as the defining feature of the continuing Islamic revolution. (Hunter, 1989B, pp. 275-277)

In conclusion, while the Iranian revolution has brought great changes to the country and the region as a whole, much of the "lessons" to be learned is that once the Islamists have been in charge they have been forced to confront the standard complex issues of administration and foreign policy:

Iran's experience seems to warrant the prognosis that in the case of a victory of militant Muslims in other countries, their domestic and foreign policies will be determined by their national peculiarities and historical experience as well as by Islam. Moreover, they, too, in time will have to take into account external factors and adapt themselves to them. This means that in the case of a victory for other militant forces, a total rupture of the Muslim states' relations with the West will not occur and that current Western anxieties about such a rupture may prove to be exaggerated. (Hunter, 1989B, p. 278)

While certainly hampered by the lingering detrimental effects of the revolution and devastating war with Iraq, the decidedly poor showing in terms of economic improvement

of Iranian society and the general lack of planning displayed in most other areas of government presents a poor image for Islamists. Thus, the key factor of Iran as a demonstration effect—both the Islamic revolution and the Islamic Republic—must be seen in its entirety to gain proper insight into perceptions among Muslims abroad. Its lack of stunning successes (after the shah's overthrow) and the predominant Shi'i character of its ideology impede its "exportability" to other Muslim communities. (Bill, 1989, p. 134) Finally, Iran provides yet another example of the inherent diversity in Islam, as the continued factional infighting that has hampered the country's efforts to overcome the various liabilities noted can be broken down into basic differences in interpretation and belief of the core, "unifying" tenants of the Shi'i faith.

F. POLITICAL ISLAM "AT WAR": THE CASE OF EGYPT

The next case study focuses on the country often seen as the heart of the Arab world, Egypt. This country is a good subject for examination in this analysis because it is often considered a "mirror" of Arab society in general (Ajami, 1992), and thus can demonstrate significant continuities with other regional states. Moreover, the history of modern political Islam begins here as well, and the lengthy period of interaction between the phenomenon and Egyptian governments and society in a variety of situations and conditions provides insight into the life spans and reactions to change of Islamist groups. Finally, Egypt's influence across the Sunni Arab world makes it imperative to study the general thrust of the ideologies and political thought patterns which have developed there, due to their typically strong influence elsewhere in the region.

Egypt, with its large Arab population and key geo-strategic location, has been a focal point of much of the political and ideological activity that has occurred in the region, and has especially been influenced by the factors of transitional society related to the growth of political Islam common throughout the Greater Middle East. The stressful impact of foreign

influence on a society with deep traditions and values was generated by successive waves of “invaders” including the Ottomans, French, and British (not to mention the initial conquests by Muslim’s of the Arabian peninsula). These outside sources brought information and technology which facilitated the country’s start on the path to modernization—with all its corresponding social discontinuities. It was also here that the influence of Islamic Modernists such Al-Afghani and Abdu was most strongly felt. This conjoining of traditional and modern influences took shape in the early form of Egyptian nationalism, preceding most similar movements by several years with the strong popular support of secular nationalist elements led by Sa’d Zaghlul in the early years of this century. His leadership of a “delegation” (*wafd*) seeking independence at the Paris Peace Conference following WWI was one of the crucial factors that eventually led to Egypt’s nominal independence by 1922. Nevertheless, the British retained real control over the country and it was not until 1952 that the revolt of the “Free Officers” removed foreign domination of Egyptian daily life. (Munson, 1988, 75-77)

1. The Muslim Brotherhood

It was in this environment that one of the leading figures of all the Islamist groups, Hassan Al-Banna, founded the Muslim Brotherhood—“the ideological and institutional epicenter of fundamentalism in the Arab sphere and the Islamic world” (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 73)—in 1928. The son of an Imam and religious teacher, Al-Banna also became a teacher and had been involved in the nationalist riots against the British in 1919. However, the continued failure of both secular nationalists and Islamic reformers to free Egypt from the British yoke, led Al-Banna to advocate a return to Islam as the key to Egypt’s future and began to organize a movement for that purpose; in his words:

My Brothers: you are not a benevolent society, nor a political party, nor a local organization having limited purposes. Rather, you are a new soul in the heart of this nation to give it life by means of the Quran; you are a new light which shines to destroy the darkness of materialism through knowing God;

and you are the strong voice which rises to recall the message of the Prophet. . . . You should feel yourselves the bearers of the burden which all others have refused. When asked what it is for which you call, reply that it is Islam, the message of Muhammad, the religion that contains within it government, and has as one of its obligations freedom. If you are told you are political, answer that Islam admits no such distinction. If you are accused of being revolutionaries, say 'We are the voices for right and for peace in which we dearly believe, and of which we are proud. If you rise against us or stand in the path of our message, then we are permitted by God to defend ourselves against your injustice.' . . . (Quoted in Mitchell, 1993, p. 30)

In developing the Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Banna established a recognizable pattern in the leadership of Islamist movements, with activities centered around his charismatic personality and organized by his comprehensive vision for the organization. From its modest beginnings in Isma'iliyya, the group soon grew and moved its headquarters to Cairo. There it began to attract many followers from all levels of society, and—despite Al-Banna's statement that the group would remain outside the political realm—soon gained an increasing role in Egyptian politics.

Even beyond this effort at gaining followers and influence, Al-Banna's comprehensive plan included:

[A]n elaborate apparatus covering virtually all aspects of social existence—propaganda, labor, peasants, students, professions, family life, athletics, legal services, the press, publications, and financial and economic affairs. Unlike Egypt's political parties, the Brotherhood emphasized its commitment to a moral order transcending politics. True to its Islamist creed, the society had attempted to build an *ummah* . . . (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 76)

The growing strength of the Brothers soon led to a perceived threat to the monarchy, and the government moved to dissolve the society. Prime Minister Nuqrashi's assassination by a Muslim Brother was followed by a "reign of terror against the society" and Al-Banna's

eventual retaliatory assassination. The group languished until the arrival of first a Wafdist government and then the 1952 Revolution of Nasser and the Free Officers. While not involved in the actual coup planning, the Brotherhood supported the coup and hoped to see an increased emphasis on Islam within the new government. However, they soon dashed that hope and the Muslim Brothers became one of the many groups demonstrating in support of a replacement civilian government. An assassination attempt on Nasser was linked to the Brotherhood in 1954, leading to a campaign of repression against the Society. (Dekmejian, 1995, pp. 75-77; Munson, 1988, p. 77)

2. Cycles of Change

This period began a series of high and low points for the Muslim Brothers in Egypt. For a decade, Nasser was able to build his strength—capitalizing on the powerful ideology of Arab nationalism, as previously discussed, to provide a more unified Arab front against Western imperialism, socioeconomic injustice, etc.,—until the onset of series of dilemmas such as the breakup of the United Arab Republic with Syria, the lingering war in Yemen, and economic problems, led him to loosen the reins on the Muslim Brotherhood (most likely out of concern for growing communist influence). However, yet another assassination attempt was uncovered that implicated the Brothers, and thousands were arrested. It was during this period of repression that another key figure of the movement, Sayyid Qutb, gained greater prominence. As the key ideologue of the group at that time, he was implicated in the conspiracy, later tried and then hung. However, during his time in prison, he continued writing and produced some of the most important works of the modern fundamentalists. Moreover, it was this period of misery that many of the younger members of the group began to question the tactics of the older leaders. Once out of prison, many of these disillusioned Brothers would become founders and leading members of the more radical neo-fundamentalist movements. (Dekmejian, 1995, p. 78; Ansari, 1984, p.135)

It took another crisis to see an increased acceptance of the Brotherhood by Nasser's regime—the disaster of the 1967 war with Israel. In the gloomy period of the war's aftermath, the soul-searching of the Arabs led many to the belief that Israel's implausible victory over the forces of Arab nationalism was due primarily to religious factors—namely, that the Israelis had remained true to their faith and were rewarded with victory, while the Arabs had turned their back on Islam and been handed defeat as a lesson. Nasser helped in this national re-embracing of Islam by using Islamic symbology and ideas within his speeches. Nevertheless, it was the death of the great Arab leader that led to the full-fledged upsurge in Islamist activities in the country. As noted, Anwar Sadat found the Muslim Brothers and their colleagues in smaller Islamists groups to be the most effective weapon to use against the core of Nasserite supporters which threatened his hold on power. By allowing them to establish networks on University campuses across the country, Sadat had a powerful force to contain the socialists. The key event which also aided him in affirming his legitimacy was the relative success of Egyptian troops in the 1973 war with Israel, and Islamic symbology was prominent throughout the episode—the operation was codenamed “Badr” after the first victory of Muhammad over his rivals in Mecca, and it was conducted in the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Still, the Muslim Pragmatist Sadat had further plans which eventually undercut his efforts to use Islam as a “legitimation device”: his drive for economic benefits from a policy of *infitah*—or opening—to the Western powers coupled with his moves toward peace with Israel angered many of the traditional elements within Egyptian society, as well as the newly emerging neo-fundamentalist groups such as the Takfir wal-Hijrah and Tanzim al-Jihad. After a series of abortive moves by these small militant movements, Sadat instituted his own campaign of repression which eventually combined with the unpopularity of his peace treaty with Israel and failing economic efforts to politicize the masses against his regime. Civil unrest grew as tension between Muslims and Coptic Christians led to clashes, and riots sparked by food shortages and other economic

concerns. In September of 1981, Sadat moved to contain the violence, with massive sweeps that eventually led to the arrested of over 3000 militants—primarily Islamists, but also Copts, and Nasserists. Within one month, he was assassinated by members of one of the small militant groups (Al-Jihad) and simultaneous clashes broke out between Islamists and security forces in towns in upper Egypt. Hosni Mubarak assumed the Presidency and harshly suppressed the violence before it got out of hand. (Dekmejian, 1995, pp. 79-84; Ansari, 1984)

The assassination of Sadat has been described as a sort of “catharsis” for the Egyptian state, which provide “breathing room” for the Mubarak regime to seek solution to the underlying problems which were the cause of civil unrest and Islamist support. (Dekmejian, 1995, pp. 176-177) While lacking the economic and symbolic assets to adequately meet these needs, Mubarak was at least able to devise a strategy by which the moderate Islamist movements were encouraged to lend support to regime reform efforts while the government sought to marginalize the smaller, radical groups. These policies helped stabilize the situation in the short term, but the crucial problems of the “crisis” environment remained. By the late 1980s, however, renewed violence between the security forces and several new groups of Islamists (who also targeted Coptic Christians) erupted in Upper Egypt and in the urban slums of Cairo. Based upon their activities and limited information on the composition of these groups, the brief summary that follows provides a good illustration of the nature of this “subgroup” of the broader phenomenon. Examples of these new movements are the Al-Gamaa al Islamiyya (the Islamic Group) and the “New Jihad.” The Gamaa is reportedly an umbrella-type organization, with a *Da'wa* wing of supportive clerics and laymen who are separated from its militant groups. Such “secret cell” activity frustrates government efforts to suppress its activities and determine its relative strength. In addition, the Gamaa reportedly has a militant “Afghan” wing based in Peshawar, Pakistan which provides training and arms for members in Egypt. This group has

been blamed for most of the widespread violence that has occurred over the last several years in Egypt, including bombings, assassinations and attacks on foreign tourists. The secretive nature of these groups hinders available information, but there are indications that a schism might have developed between the various wings of the movement over future means of action and targets for violence—a plausible occurrence given the ideological basis for their activities. Now, it seems that the “Afghan” wing may be working to discredit attempted negotiations between the regime and at least some Gamaa elements within the country. Meanwhile, another example of these newer neo-fundamentalist groups is the “New Jihad,” which has tenuously been labeled either another branch of the Gamaa or a revitalized version of the original Jihad organization of the early 1980s. This group has been accused of attempting to infiltrate the armed forces and has conducted attacks against government officials and tourist sites. (Dunn, 1993, pp. 75-76)

3. Conclusions

This brief review of the development of Islamic groups over the recent history of Egypt provides evidence of both Dekmejian’s proposed “patterns of evolution” of the Islamist groups and Salem’s theories on the “dynamics of ideologies.” The Muslim Brotherhood began as a small, more radical movement that soon grew much larger and subsequently more conservative in its outlook. Frustration among the younger members with the conservative approach followed by its leaders led to the growth of offshoots to the original movement which favored more aggressive tactics. The ebb-and-flow of the Islamist ideology in relation to the regimes can be directly related to specific crises or other significant events such as the wars with Israel, major assassinations, etc. The question remains: How powerful are these groups? Will Egypt become another Iran? As noted the evidence is sketchy at best concerning the strength of these groups, and much comes from potentially suspect government sources. However, the inherent strength of Egyptian society

and general abhorrence of violence common among its members make support for radical groups minimal at best (Dunn, 1993, p. 77). Fouad Ajami recently echoed such sentiments:

We must not exaggerate the strength of the theocratic challenge or the magnitude of the middle class' defection. In our fixation on the Iranian Revolution—the armed imam chasing Caesar out of power—we have looked for it everywhere and grafted its themes and outcomes onto societies possessed of vastly different traditions and temperaments. There never was a chance that Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, the blind Egyptian preaching fire and brimstone in Brooklyn, would return to his land, Khomeini-like, to banish the secular powers and inherit the realm. Even the men who gunned down Sadat were under no illusions about their own power in the face of the state. No fools, these men knew the weight of the state, the strength of all they were hurling themselves against. They sought only to punish the “tyrant,” sparing the lives of his lieutenants (Hosni Mubarak included) who stood inches away Sadat's inheritors would be humbled [and] they would refrain . . . the kinds of violations Sadat . . . committed against the mores of the land. (Ajami, 1995, pp. 75-76)

The real danger in this atmosphere of unrest comes from regime efforts to suppress insurgent activities, with indications of more moderate elements being included in arrests during security sweeps, etc. Mishandling of the delicate balance between legitimate counter-violence and brutal repression can only serve to harm regime legitimacy and mobilize greater opposition to its tactics, especially among moderate Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood. Even if such “radicalization” of the moderate movements and potentially the Egyptian masses occur, however, it is unlikely that “another Iran” will occur, and this is due to several factors: first, the strength of the regime is much more stable than in pre-revolutionary Iran, and the target has been identified for security forces to act against; second, the opposition currently lacks a figure even close to the charismatic ideal presented by Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. Moreover, the lack of Iranian traditions of firm clerical hierarchies with a history of political involvement coupled with the typically more conservative Sunni stance on political violence point toward limited appeal for ideologies

espousing militant means of action. While continued unrest is quite likely, given the continuation of the "sources" for Islamist support generated by the "crisis" environment, an Islamist takeover is remote; more plausible, though still unlikely would be a military takeover of the government to "rescue" the country from the chaos of spiraling violence and counter-violence.

G. COOPTED POLITICAL ISLAM: THE CASE OF PAKISTAN

The issue of military involvement in government is an appropriate transition when moving to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, for as will be shown, the military has held the primary role as the "foundation" upon which the state rests—while Islam is the "mortar" which holds its various subgroups together. Developed under the unique circumstances of decolonialization of British India, Pakistan today is a good example of what Palmer describes as a consociational state, in which the primary loyalties of its people remained directed to tribal, ethnic, religious or sub-state groupings. Leaders of these parochial groups distribute resources to members of the group as patronage, thus reinforcing claims to the members' loyalty. In this way, national resources are used to support tribal or ethnic loyalties and not to foster a sense of national political community or build loyalty to the nation. "Such consociational arrangements work well as long as the major leaders can strike a bargain acceptable to all parties and as long as the parochial leaders can control their followers and ensure that they, too, will play by the rules. If one major group withdraws from the contract, or if the members of that group refuse to accept the contract, violence is usually the result." (Palmer, 1989, p.106) The history of Pakistan has shown significant examples of such violence, and this lack of national unity has been a key reason for the continued appeal of Islamic ideology as a basis for legitimation in Pakistan.

1. A Prototype Islamist Group: The Jamaat-i-Islami

In pursuing an assessment of political Islam's impact on the Pakistani sociopolitical environment, the focus of this case study will be on the relations of fundamentalist movements with the government and foreign states or groups, and the future prospects of the Islamic resurgence there. Conclusions based upon this survey will likely have broader relevance to other Muslim countries and general U.S. policy toward the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism since much of the following discussion involves Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami (The Islamic Group, JI). Mumtaz Ahmad (1991A, p. 462) describes JI as the prototypical Islamic fundamentalist movement; it has served as an actual model for many other Islamic political groups. Based upon research of JI, he provides some "core ideas of contemporary Islamic fundamentalism" which serve as key links between these various groups—an recap of some of the primary points concerning Islamists and their ideologies, but with a focus on JI:

- **First**, the Jamaat-i-Islami seeks to restore the original teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunna* and to re-create the socioreligious system established under the direct guidance of the Prophet and his first four successors—"the rightly guided caliphs."
- **Second**, at least in theory it tends to reject the later developments in Islamic theology, law, and philosophy as well as the institutional structures of historical Muslim societies that evolved during the period of empires. In actual practice, however, like most of the other fundamentalist groups, it does not deny outright the legitimacy of historical Islam.
- **Third**, unlike the conservative ulama, who for all practical purposes, maintain that the gates of *ijtihad* (independent legal judgement) have long been closed, the Jamaat-i-Islami upholds the right to *ijtihad* and fresh thinking on matters not directly covered in the teachings of the Quran and the *Sunnah*. But, unlike Islamic [M]odernists, who would like to institutionalize the exercise of *ijtihad* in the popularly elected assemblies, the Jamaat restricts this right only to those who are

well versed in both the classical sciences of Islam and in modern disciplines. . . . However, if we look at the major issues with which the Jamaat-i-Islami and other fundamentalist movements have concerned themselves in modern times and at their opposition to the liberal-modernist trends in Islam, we see very little difference between them and the conservative *ulama*. Besides their demand for the establishment of an Islamic state and the introduction of an Islamic constitution—the two demands that have become their trademark—the other main questions on which the fundamentalists have taken a rigid and uncompromising position include abolition of bank interest, introduction of the *zakat* system (obligatory alms tax for charitable purposes), introduction of Islamic penal and family laws, enforcement of a strict sociomoral code in sex roles, prohibition of birth control as a state-funded program, and suppression of heretical groups. None of [which] distinguishes them from conservative Islam.

- **Fourth**, fundamentalists do differ from the conservative *ulama* in their concept of Islam as a *din*, which they interpret as a “Way of life.” The Jamaat-i-Islami criticizes the conservative *ulama* for reducing Islam to the five pillars—profession of faith, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage. For them, Islam means the total commitment and subordination of all aspects of human life to the will of God.
- **Fifth**, . . . the Jamaat-i-Islami seeks to replace the folk and popular practices of Sufi Islam with the approved rituals of orthodox Islam. . . . They present Islam as a dynamic and activist political ideology which must acquire state power in order to implement its social, economic, and political agenda.
- **Sixth**, . . . one of the most important defining characteristics of the Jamaat-i-Islami and other Islamic fundamentalist movements: unlike the conservative *ulama* and the modernists, the fundamentalist movements are primarily political rather than religio-intellectual movements. While both the *ulama* and the modernists seek influence in public policy-making structures, the fundamentalists aspire to capture political power and establish an Islamic state on the prophetic model. They are not content to act as pressure groups, as are the *ulama* and the modernists. They want political power because they believe that Islam cannot be implemented without the power of the state.
- **Finally**, as lay scholars of Islam, leaders of the fundamentalist movements are not theologians but social thinkers and political activists. . . . The main thrust of their

intellectual efforts is the articulation of the socioeconomic and political aspects of Islam. (Ahmad, 1991A, pp. 462-464)

With this summary of Ahmad's analysis of JI as a basis of understanding the primary Islamist group in Pakistan, the examination can now proceed to a comparison of the various other actors involved in religio-political activity.

2. Fundamentalist Movements in Pakistan

Within the broader framework outlined in the preceded "overview" of somewhat typical Islamist movements, three general "categories" of Islamic groups exist in contemporary Pakistan: the *ulama*-based religious organizations, the non-political *da'wa*-type revivalist movements, and the lay religio-political movements like the JI. (Ahmad, 1991B, p.156) Such a breakdown of these Pakistani groups helps to further display the diversity of similar groups elsewhere in the Greater Middle East region.

a. Ulama-based organizations

Among those in the first group—the *ulama*-led Islamic movements—there are four main organizations that have become significant actors within Pakistani politics. The Jamiyat Ulama-i-Pakistan (The Society of Pakistani Ulama, JUP), led by Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani, has a religious ideology based on folk Islam and Sufism. Its political platform has focused on the introduction of *Shari'a*, with the proviso that its own "denominational domain" (Religious shrines, Muslim Family Laws, endowments) is safeguarded. It draws much of its support from the Urdu-speaking regions of urban Sind, as well as many rural areas of Punjab not under the influence of the intellectual and doctrinal influence of Islamic orthodoxy. Second, the Jamiyat Ulama-i-Islam (The Society of Muslim Ulama, JUI) is an ultra-conservative party which presents a platform based upon the purest form of Islamic orthodoxy. The *ulama* members of JUI are associates of the Indian Deoband Islamic seminary who espouse a strict translation of the rules of the *Shari'a* (as interpreted by the founders of the four classical Sunni schools of jurisprudence) and rigid adherence to

religious beliefs. As such, they are opposed to the JUP's syncretic form of religion, and consider any "creative" religious activities such as Sufism or Islamic modernist revisions as *bida'* (innovations). They envision the role of the *ulama* in politics as retaining the ultimate authority to determine whether laws developed by Parliament conform to the *Shari'a*. Also, they place great emphasis on enforcing a strict Islamic moral and social code, and are especially incensed at the growing influence of Western culture and mores on Pakistani society. (Ahmad, 1991B, pp.157-158)

A third *ulama*-based movement is the Jamiyat Ulama-i-Ahl-i-Hadith (The Society of Ulama of "the people of the Hadith," JUAH), otherwise known as the Wahhabis as they adhere to an ultra-conservative theocratic stance similar to Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the eighteenth century Arab puritanical reformer who was a co-founder of modern-day Saudi Arabia. The fundamental tenet of its religious ideology—the primacy of *Hadith* (the traditions of the Prophet) over juridical opinions or decrees—coupled with its uncompromising monotheism and rejection of purely rational sciences (i.e., philosophy, some forms of theology, etc.) lead to a political "crusade against the 'religious excesses' of syncretic Islam" as followed by members of the JUP and Sufi orders. (Ahmad, 1991B, p.159) In addition, JUAH is fervently opposed to the concept and supporting institutions of Western democracy, finding no support within the *Shari'a* for legislative authority, universal suffrage or multiparty elections. It has a limited following, primarily among businessmen in Karachi and some towns in Punjab. Finally, the Shi'ite Tahrik-i-Nifaz-i-Fiqh-i-Ja'afriya (Movement for the Enforcement of Ja'afiri Law, TNFJ) is the primary organization representing the religious and political concerns of Pakistan's minority Shi'i population. The TNFJ was formed in reaction to General Zia al-Haq's Sunni-oriented Islamization programs, seeking to protect the religious freedom of the Shi'i, safeguard their religious endowments, to seek the parallel introduction of Shi'ite Ja'afiri law along with any Sunni-led plan for *Shari'a* implementation and to maintain close relations with the neighboring Shi'ite

majority state of Iran. Despite the TNFJ's close ties with Iranian supporters, its scattered support base translates into a lack of a majority Shi'i population in most electoral constituencies and thus hinders its ability to directly capture political power through the electoral process. (Ahmad, 1991B, p.160)

b. *Da'wa-type Organizations*

The most prominent of the non-political *da'wa*-type revivalist groups, the Tablighi Jamaat (Association for the Propagation of Islam, TJ), is a grass-roots, lay Muslim-led movement drawing support from all levels of society. Eschewing political activities—and thus not directly matching the established “core idea” of a fundamentalist group as seeking political power—TJ members view religion as a more personal, private affair for individuals. TJ focuses its efforts on propagating Islam's moral and religious principles as well as introducing orthodox Islam as a paradigm for reforming indigenous socio-religious customs. Nevertheless, the great scope of their work and extensive support within certain sectors of Pakistani society make TJ a key actor in the continuing infusion of Islam into the sociopolitical order of the country—in an obviously different manner than the Muslim Pragmatists of Husain's typology. With itinerant-based *da'wa* techniques, this group has been highly successful in spreading its influence throughout South Asia and beyond, with activities in over one hundred countries worldwide. With its focus on missionary work and communal revivalism, TJ has not needed a hierarchical leadership group or bureaucratic organization—it remains “a free floating religious movement,” in contrast with most of the politically oriented groups, especially the Jamaat-i-Islami. (Ahmad, 1991A, pp. 459, 510-524)

c. *Lay Religio-political Organizations*

The third category—lay religio-political movements—is eclipsed by the Jamaat-i-Islami. Founded by Abul Ala Maududi in 1941, it has become the most important South Asian Islamic political movement. In stark contrast to the Tablighi Jamaat, JI has

developed into a "highly structured, hierarchically organized, bureaucratic-type organization" with numerous departments and branches across the nation. (Ahmad, 1991A, p. 459) Initially against partition (Maududi favored preserving the united Indo-Muslim community instead), JI has been active in Pakistani politics since independence in 1947, playing a major role in shaping the discourse of Islamic society and politics. Unlike the other groups, which are mostly content to acknowledge their minority status and simply seek to influence political debate in favor of religious principles, the Jamaat is focused on a political ideology that is more assertive and assumes the need for an Islamic order instituted from above. Its goal remains an actual change of political power in which the Islamists would take charge of reforming the government and redirecting the sociopolitical culture of the country in order to establish an Islamic state, with the Quran and *Sunna* (the way of the Prophet) as its constitution and *Shari'a* as its law. Strongly unified and effectively organized, JI has taken on the challenges presented over the years from Islamic modernism, secular liberalism, communism and "Islamic socialism" and fervently sought to voice its message of Islamic conservatism and activism. The Jamaat has also established close ties with other Islamic movements throughout the Muslim world, and has often taken a strong stand in support of the more "militant" Muslim causes (Kashmir, the Arab-Israeli dispute, the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, etc.). While the other groups are active in Pakistani politics, the Jamaat stands well above the rest, and will be a key focal point through the rest of the paper.

3. Islam and the Nation of Pakistan

Pakistan is a unique country, created in 1947 solely as a homeland for Indian Muslims—Islam is its reason d'être. With few of the historical roots, common ethnic or linguistic bonds, or even fully recognized borders typically claimed by most nations, Islam serves as the primary cohesive unifying element for the country. At its inception, the "nation" of Pakistan was a composite of diverse peoples, separated not only by distance (the provinces of East and West Pakistan were divided by over one thousand miles of Indian territory) and

strong regionalist interests (five distinct regional “identities” were incorporated in the new state), but also by numerous spoken languages (thirty-two different languages drawn from five major linguistic families).

While desirous of implementing a suitable process for nation-building, the Pragmatist founder and first governor-general of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, and his early successors were severely constrained by the harsh truths associated with the post-partition period: Hindu-Muslim communal rioting, the displacement of vast numbers of refugees, the conflict over Kashmir with India, the subsequent social and political upheavals, the breakdown of law and order, and the tragic death of Jinnah barely a year after independence. Moreover, the intellectual elite adhered to a more modernist viewpoint, which downplayed the emphasis on Islam as part of that nation-building process. Thus, while efforts were made to formulate the new state’s ideology, and its employment through government policies, programs, and institutions, no clear understanding or consensus could be found of the requisite relationship between Islam and the state. Jinnah, despite fervent calls for a separate “Muslim” state prior to partition, focused on implementing secular institutions taken mostly from the system provided by Pakistan’s former British rulers. This direction of effort (towards secularism) was understandable given the Muslim Pragmatist background of Jinnah and his close associates, but it was an embodiment of the feared results of partition for the members of the fundamentalist groups and the *ulama*. (Esposito, 1991, pp. 113-114)

4. Islam and Government Policy

Given the diverse makeup and fragile polity of Pakistan, an Islamization program can thus be seen as an attempt at nation-building, centered on the single factor from which a shared culture and national identity can be derived. (Mayer, 1993, p. 123) While presenting a diverse orientation and interpretation of “Islamic ideology,” each of Pakistan’s successive governments have employed Islam as both a source of legitimization for their power and policies, and a weapon to weaken or suppress their political opponents. In a cyclical manner,

alternating between a liberalist and conservative interpretation, the early leaders of government sought (unsuccessfully) to find the proper blend of Islam with modern (Western) concepts of government and social order. Unresolved differences led to ad hoc approaches in search of tentative compromises rather than firm solutions, resulting in no firm attempt "to define and implement Pakistan's Islamic identity and ideology." (Esposito, 1991, p. 121) Little agreement was seen beyond the need to establish a Muslim homeland, but even that general definition was ambiguous.

Early events which indicated the struggle between modernist and traditional factions included the nine-year effort to frame the first constitution (which essentially paid "lip-service" to Islamic principles while installing modern constitutional concepts as law); (Esposito, 1991, p. 114) the sectarian strife over the Ahmadiyya—a modern Islamic sect seen as heretical by most *ulama* and Fundamentalist group leaders (Which resulted in a national court of inquiry report that was unable to find agreement on such fundamental questions as: What is Islam?, What constitutes a believer? and What is the nature of an Islamic state?); (Esposito, 1991, pp. 114-115) General Ayub Khan's abrogation of the original constitution and promulgation of a new, modernist constitution in 1962 (which was even more limited in its "Islamic" character and seen as a grave "defeat" for traditionalists); and the harsh debate over the liberalized Muslim Family Laws Ordinance (which predictably drew widespread criticism from the religious establishment and the fundamentalists). (Esposito, 1991, pp. 116-120)

A revealing event in the history of Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan was the elections of 1970. The announcement was met with some surprise when General Aha Khan announced elections for December 1970, seeking to reinstate civilian rule in an attempt to overcome the debilitating effects of concurrent clashes between Islam and Bengali nationalism in East Pakistan and between Islam and socialism in West Pakistan. Fundamentalist organizations, headed by the Jamaat-i-Islami, sought to contest the elections, with a platform

of Islamic solidarity in the face of the twin dangers of separatism and atheistic socialism. The Jamaat, employing its massive network of supporters, was predicted to win a great number of National Assembly seats, but in the end the formidable campaign effort delivered only four seats out of three hundred in the national legislature. Despite basing twenty years of struggle to attain free elections, in the belief that an overwhelming majority of Pakistanis would vote for Islam if given free choice, the Jamaat ended up with a total disaster. It was, in short, "the greatest political set-back the Jamaat had received ever since its inception." (Ahmad, 1991A, pp. 475-476.)

Nevertheless, the Jamaat-i-Islami sought to overcome the extreme disappointment of the December 1970 election and learn from its mistakes. It redoubled its efforts to build a stronger support base by placing greater emphasis on practical social requirements which had been downplayed in its drive for an Islamic constitution. It decided to capitalize on the extensive strength of its students' wing, the Islami Jamiat-i-Talaba (Islamic Society of Students, IJT), to employ a strategy employing "street power" (as opposed to parliament seats) to influence Pakistan's political system. Evidence of the success of this new approach was seen in the struggle against Bhutto as part of the *Khatmi-e-Nabuwwat* (finality of the Prophethood) and *Nizam-e-Mustafa* (System of the Prophet Muhammad) movements. Another likely occurrence might have been a realization that the democratic process was not the best potential for advancing their cause—a potential explanation for the JJ's readily accepting the military coup of General Zia in 1977 (and even joining his advisory staff for a time).

Thus, it was a rather unexpected development that the regime of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his socialist Pakistan People's Party (PPP) became the initial source of a dedicated Islamization program in Pakistan. Many factors influenced this occurrence, namely the "identity crisis" which followed the 1971 war (the loss of East Pakistan led to soul-searching over Islam's place in the sociopolitical realm), the desire to gain financial support from the

oil-rich Arab Gulf states (leading to a reemphasis of Pakistan's Islamic bonds to the Arab world) and, most important, domestic political issues (as the fundamentalist opposition to Bhutto's policies grew, he made a number of concessions, including declaring the Ahmadiyya a non-Muslim minority and added "Islamic" provisions in the 1973 constitution). (Esposito, 1991, pp. 166-167) While focused on specifically on social development and solidarity with fellow Muslim Arab states, the platform of Bhutto's regime gradually began to emphasize a populist interpretation of Islam—under the standard of "Islamic socialism." Stressing social justice and *musawat* ("equality") as fundamental Islamic precepts, and basic features of historical Muslim societies that existed under the direct guidance of the Prophet and the *Rashidun*, the PPP pursued a domestic strategy of socioeconomic redistribution and broader political participation. (Karawan, 1992, pp.115-116)

Nevertheless, civil unrest grew and the religious movements united in an effort to oust Bhutto in the 1977 elections, under banners of "Islam is in danger," etc. The opposition block, the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), was spearheaded by Maududi's Jamaat-i-Islami and drew widespread support from the "new" middle class and traditional businessmen who were alienated by Bhutto's economic and political reforms. To counter the groundswell of support for the PNA, the PPP forces moved increasingly towards a more "Islamic" platform and essentially dropped all reference to socialism. By the time of the elections in March 1977, the lack of a truly broad-based support for the fundamentalists was evident once again, as Bhutto and the PPP scored an impressive victory. However, widespread charges of vote fraud became the spark for civil unrest, and the PNA forces led great opposition marches in protest of the regime. Seeking to appease the religious elements, Bhutto announced a number of further Islamization measures (including prohibition of alcohol and gambling, and measures to introduce *Shari'a* law into the constitution) but was unsuccessful in quelling disturbances. (Esposito, 1991, pp. 168-170)

5. President Zia and Islamization

On 5 July 1977, the turmoil surrounding the anti-Bhutto movement was abruptly halted by the bloodless military coup of General Zia al-Haq. Appealing to Islam and promising to establish a social order based on *Nizam-e-Mustafa* to legitimate his over through of the Bhutto regime, Zia sought to form an alliance with the Islamic movements. While some, like the JUI, rebuffed his efforts, the JUP and the Jamaat-i-Islami welcomed the chance to provide advice and assistance in his effort to bring an Islamic government into being. Many JI members served as cabinet officials and in other key posts under Zia, who solidified his authority by successfully coopting the Islamic fervor of the PNA and denouncing Bhutto for "un-Islamic" behavior (Bhutto was subsequently executed on 4 April 1979). (Esposito, 1991, p. 171) With the aid of the fundamentalists, Zia announced plans for a broad program of Islamization, including educational and cultural reforms, the creation of *Shari'a* courts, the institution Islamic taxes (*zakat* and *ushr*), and an Islamic penal code. Thus began the process of firmly imposing Islamic measures on Pakistan's sociopolitical environment, reenforcing an Islamic identity of the state.

Nevertheless, much of Zia's effort was focused more on legitimating his continued authoritarian rule, and planned elections continued to be postponed due to the need to develop a truly "Islamic" form of democracy. Critics of Zia began to grow more vociferous, as members of the PPP were joined by PNA supporters angered over the continued implementation of martial law and the "highjacking" of democracy. It was not until 1984 that Zia finally began the first concrete steps toward a return to civilian rule. After announcing a surprise referendum seeking a mandate for continuation of Islamization (and by default an extension of Zia's rule), martial law was finally lifted and non-party elections for national and provincial level offices were held, with civilian rule restored by late 1985. The tension between the modernist influences and the fundamentalists returned in political debates, as Jamaat-i-Islami Senate members introduced *Shari'a* bills and proposed changes

to the Family Laws Ordinance in hopes of accelerating the Islamization effort. Still, Zia was able to moderate the pace of change through his continued hold on the reigns of power. The final event which ended the Zia era was not a planned transition of any sort, however, as the President was killed in a suspicious plane crash on 17 August 1988. (Esposito, 1991, pp. 172-181)

6. Recent Events

Pakistan's first party-based national elections were held in November 1988, with the efforts to gain power by the Islamic fundamentalists, again in a coalition—the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, once again being thwarted by the PPP, now under the leadership of Benazir Bhutto. Her stormy rule as the Muslim world's first female Prime Minister was characterized as more of a fight for political survival than an effective exercise of political power. While her election could be interpreted as a referendum on Zia's Islamization efforts, the slim margin of victory (39% to 32% for the Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA), the "heirs" to Zia's legacy), coupled with Pakistan's fragile state of democracy, virtually ensured little efficient political action being taken. (Esposito, 1991, pp. 180-182; also Mayer, 1993, p. 129) Despite efforts to cultivate her own "Islamic profile," Bhutto was badgered by the fundamentalists and beset with a rising tide of domestic violence. More important, she was "held hostage" to the same powerful forces Zia had drawn support from: the Army and the U.S. Conditions continued to deteriorate, until President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed Bhutto and dissolved Parliament on 6 August 1990. In elections held on 24 October 1990, the PPP was pitted against another coalition led by the IDA, and including most of the fundamentalists. In a somewhat startling outcome, the IDA gained an overwhelming victory on a platform that promised to implement *Shari'a* as the supreme law of the land. On 11 April 1991 IDA leader Nawaz Sharif introduced the Enforcement of *Shari'a* Act 1991, with an address before a joint session of parliament that was punctuated with the statement "I am not a fundamentalist." (Mayer, 1993, p. 130) Despite the overt call for implementation of

Shari'a, it seems that Sharif was, in fact, true to his word—he was not a fundamentalist and was especially careful to avoid that label in fear of losing further support from the U.S. and other Western powers to his ailing country. He was more concerned with basic social and economic issues, and any major plans for renewed Islamization were hindered by various other events in 1990-1991 (the Gulf War, suspension of U.S. aid, etc.); the Bill placed before parliament was similar to measures pursued by Zia and deliberately left decisions on implementation of moral codes and other provisions vague and abstract. (Esposito, 1991, pp. 180-182)

Coming in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent influx of hundreds of thousands of Western, and particularly U.S., troops into the Gulf States, the U.S. decision to cut all economic and military aid to Pakistani because of its nuclear program served as a key rallying point for the various religious groups. While none were supportive of U.S. efforts during this period, the most vocal critic was the Jamaat-i-Islami. Incensed that the U.S. would cut critical support over the vital, “defensively-oriented” nuclear program—a clear anti-Islamic stance given the U.S. stance on similar programs in India and Israel—and reduce aid to Islamic forces of the Afghan *mujahedin* still battling to free their country, the Jamaat took a cynical view of U.S. efforts to pursue a peaceful outcome in the Gulf war, decrying the Western drive to destroy Saddam and further weaken the Muslim world. (Ahmad, 1991B, pp. 161-166) Continued high tension involving Kashmir was yet another source of anxiety for Pakistanis. However, despite the rhetoric and strident efforts of the fundamentalists, Pakistan’s Islamization program is still much the same as under Zia—an open public display but, in reality, of little substance.

In 1993, Pakistan saw further political turmoil, and yet another government fall, as President Khan dismissed Nawaz Sharif and dissolved Parliament—on charges of corruption, maladministration and subversion. (Tripathi, 1993, p. 102) Sharif and Khan had been involved in a lingering dispute over political power and the functions of their respective

offices. Khan finally called on the Army to intervene—after arranging with Benazir Bhutto for a place in the caretaker government. (Tripathi, 1993, p. 103) Bhutto went on to win the latest round of elections, which again saw the fundamentalists marginalized. Through it all the basic questions of Pakistani identity and the relationship between Islam and the state have yet to be resolved; the conflict between Islamic ideology and a more secular understanding of nation building and state making lies at the heart of the instability of the country.

7. The Pakistani Army

Though not touched upon in the rest of the case study—except in terms of its leaders periodically taking over the government—the central position occupied by the Pakistani Army must be included in *any* analysis of Pakistan. In a country with a (previously noted) history of divisiveness like Pakistan has endured, there must be some type of “pillar” to support the rest of the state when conditions deteriorate—for Pakistan, that “pillar” is the Army. Since the time of partition, the Army has served as a moderating influence and likely delayed (somewhat) the advent of dissension over the question of Islam in Pakistani social and political spheres. A Westernized officer corps which maintained a rather “un-Islamic” appearance, along with the successive military regimes of Generals Ayub Khan and Yahya Khan, had tremendous influence on the social and political environment of Pakistan. (Cohen, 1984, pp. 88-89) The modernist influences of the Army provided a check on the fundamentalists’ power, at least until the Zia regime. By that time, however, the Army had undergone a “soul-searching” period similar to that of the general populace in the aftermath of the 1971 war. With the advent of Zia, the Army took up the task of Islamization; though remaining somewhat ambivalent about the mission, most officers realized the need to have some improvement in the conditions of the country. The inherent tension over the relation of Islam and the state within Pakistani society is also manifest in the Army, though it remains a strongly cohesive force which still provides the requisite “pillar” of support to the

country. Most of all, the post-Zia Army leadership has retained an active role in politics and will serve as a restraint on any potential fundamentalist excesses. (Cohen, 1984, pp. 91-94)

8. Conclusion/Prospects for the Future

In conclusion, the steady progress of Islam from the periphery to a central place in Pakistani politics has actually been somewhat of a paradox for most actors in the political process. Despite Zia's vigorous efforts to cloak his dictatorial rule in Islamic reformist-attire, evidence shows the program was more of a legitimization device, and a lesser attempt to enforce a Islamic identity upon the country, as opposed to a genuinely broad-based campaign for religio-political reform. Despite the initial popular support for such efforts, backing later waned; even the Islamists became disconcerted eventually. The real downside was felt strongly in later years, as the excessive promises made under the Islamization platform raised popular expectations while providing none of the desired improvements in social justice or living conditions. (Karawan, 1992, pp.116-117)

A number of general conclusions can be made from the study of Islamic fundamentalist movements in Pakistan: First, despite the significant influence of the fundamentalist groups on policy-making and sociopolitical reforms, they did not bring about a "reversion to premodern Islamic Law" which has been a concern of Western political analysts interested in the progress of democratization in the Muslim world; in fact, the fundamentalists actually conducted a selective retrieval of key tenets of the *Shari'a* which would support their current priorities and left a vast majority of the "Western" legal system untouched. (Mayer, 1993, p. 142) Efforts to introduce "Islamic" legal codes or religio-political reforms were met with vocal domestic unrest and external condemnation (such as from the U.S. and Iran; a lightly addressed issue in this study, but still a significant concern in terms of Pakistani foreign affairs). Moreover, as in the past, it is unlikely that the Army leadership will allow any radical changes to the country's sociopolitical system; it is also doubtful that they would

allow fundamentalist control of the government, should the instance ever arise (an unlikely possibility in the near term). (Fuller, 1991, pp.36-37)

The general "failure" of Islamization was noted in a 1989 interview by Dr. Akbar S. Ahmed, Chairman of Pakistan Studies at Cambridge, with the statement:

... General Zia was not able to 'Islamise' Pakistan. He certainly made Pakistan and the wider world aware of some of the issues involved in Islamising a society. . . . Islam, as a consequence of the last decade, has begun to be identified with many of the more negative features in society, such as lashing, the cutting off of hands, the stoning of an illegitimate infant near a mosque The positive and permanent aspects of Islam have not been brought to the fore, the more permanent and fundamental aspects of Islam, such as the emphasis on piety, genuine humility, *ilm* (knowledge) and the respect for learning, as well as the encouragement of brotherhood and tolerance. Pakistan is essentially a plural and multi-ethnic society. When the culture and ideology of one group is firmly and forcibly thrust upon other groups there is a natural and historic reaction against that particular ideology. There was, therefore, a general kind of resistance to Islamisation, largely due to the more negative aspects . . . identified. (Ahmed, 1989, p. 57)

In addition, the influence of Islamic fundamentalism on government policy is often reflected in an accentuation of the authoritarian and repressive measures of the regime in power. Absolutist tendencies lead to stated claims (and possibly actual delusions) by regimes of a divine mandate, permitting them to enact measures that will strengthen their hold on power and diminish the status of opponents. The special military courts, staffed by fundamentalists, were usually the only place that "Islamic justice" was meted out; local bar associations and judges with Western educations have hesitated to implement *Shari'a* law, seeing it as outside the bounds of the "rule of law." (Mayer, 1993, p. 142)

Finally, while "Islam" and "the *Shari'a*" have positive connotations for Muslims, once the fundamentalists are forced to provide specifics on programs or policies, their message loses its popular support. Should the situation arise that the Islamists gained power and

attempted to strictly implement fundamentalist policies, it is unlikely that the population would allow them to remain in office long under fully democratic conditions (much less the Army under any circumstances). The more likely occurrence for Islamist influence in Pakistani politics will be under the watchful eye of a future “coalition” partner, possibly another political party, but most likely another military regime similar to that of Zia. (Mayer, 1993, pp. 142-144)

Thus, while the Islamist parties will likely remain a potent force in Pakistan—especially in the intellectual and social spheres—it is unlikely that they will achieve the popular support base necessary to come into power in Pakistan. The platforms they espouse have little to offer the primarily rural lower classes, the intellectuals are split between modernist and traditionalist factions, and the Army—most importantly—is quite reluctant to see further major progress on the Islamization campaign. The central issues that divide Pakistan, particularly the ethnic and social factionalization, will continue to hinder the ability for any party—not just the Islamists—to garner widespread support for broader religio-political reforms.

H. THE MYTH OF THE GREEN MENACE

To close this chapter, some general thoughts on the transnational aspects of the phenomenon of political Islam are appropriate. The fact that the fundamental sources of the faith remain constant for all Muslims, and—more importantly—are invoked in similar rhetoric by a wide range of actors, leads to the basis for the “monolithic” label of Islamic fundamentalism provided by some analysts and Orientalist scholars. Given the diversity evident in the case studies just presented, however, there are evidently actually a number of these so-called monolithic “Islams” within both the Sunni and Shi’i sects of the faith. These include “establishment” Islam—the traditional religious practice, as espoused by the regimes and *ulama* in the Sunni and Shi’i sects; “popular” Islam—a more personal orientation, often

manifesting itself as Sufi Islam and mysticism, and *da'wa*-type "grass roots" revivalism; "modernist" Islam—which seeks to reconcile the beliefs of Islam with the contemporary environment and influences of Western rational thought; and that of the "Islamists"—with the various groups, both moderates and radicals, oriented towards an active quest for a political system which embodies the authentic and "unchanging" precepts of the faith.

Still, the stereotypes brought on by years of viewing Islam as, at best, exerting a negative impact on Muslim society in terms of "Western-style" modernization and, at worst, as the precedent for a contemporary version of the Crusades, are hard to overcome. The analysis included here should help to clarify the subject, but further evidence helping to deflate the myth of the "Green Menace" comes from the history of political relations in the region. Contemporary analysis has sometimes offered Islamism or "Islamic fundamentalism" as a replacement for the global threat of communism. In an analysis of that phenomenon, Ken Jowitt finds that the crucial elements to a "global Soviet bloc" was the fact that Moscow acted as a coordinating "center" for the group, controlling much of its activities and relations with the "outside":

The Soviet bloc was an international political organization based upon political replication of the Soviet "sacred center" and political segmentation of its constituent "castle regimes." The Soviet bloc was a remarkable contemporary instance of autarkic, mutually isolated regimes linked to and through a center whose identity was replicated in detailed fashion at the expense of each non-Soviet regime's political "personality." (Jowitt, 1992, p. 175)

Given this requisite "center" as a basis for the previous monolithic bloc, a potential means of identifying the likelihood for a similar "Islamic international" would be to find the focal point of Islamic activities. As has been shown, however, the evidence of solidarity among the states across the Greater Middle East is scant at best. Zubaida, among others rightly points to the primacy of the nation-state in both government and opposition activities. An

alternative, then, is to look at those organizations which do link together various Muslim states, on an institutional or at least symbolic basis of mutual interests.

One of the most important of the groups is the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). While the common Western perception is that a Muslim-led OPEC bloc dominates the world oil markets by skillfully manipulating prices, evidence shows that in reality the contemporary markets have expanded to such a degree that OPEC production significantly lags production from the rest of the world. This situation is in stark contrast to conditions in the 1970s where the cartel controlled approximately 70% of the world's production, and oil shocks were routine. Not only have the Western countries sought out and expanded alternative sources of oil, but they have also increased their efficiency in energy usage, thus decreasing the requirements for oil per unit of production. Now, the West still relies on a large amount of OPEC oil, and that group's reserves are the world's largest by far, but the crux of the matter is that the national interests of the OPEC states have come first ahead of any strong solidarity in recent years. Production quotas are routinely broken, and the savvy producers realize the "special" relationship that exists between producer and consumer. (Richards and Waterbury, 1990, pp. 59-68) Moreover, these countries have failed to use their wealth to significantly advance common "Islamic" causes, preferring instead to use "their vast petrodollar wealth and petroleum resources to support and to encourage their particular views of Islam and the prerequisites for their national interests" (Husain, 1995, p. 208).

Another grouping which seems a likely candidate around which to build an "Islamic international" is the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Initially organized by Saudi Arabia in an attempt to promote its version of pan-Islam to combat what it saw as the unpleasant effect of Nasser's pan-Arabism in the 1960s, and then serving as a rallying point for all Muslims in the aftermath of the 1967 war, this organization today includes over fifty countries and has a tremendous impact on the broader Islamic "revival" that exists in the

Muslim world. Many Muslim states that are opponents in other areas use this organization as a means of unification and communication on mutual interest and problems. Again, however, the substance of concern—a concerted effort to unify the disparate countries and Islamist movements into a bloc capable of coordinated action contrary to Western (or any other) interests is just not evident in reality:

[T]he national interests of OIC members states far outweigh any commitment to Islamic solidarity. The OIC's attempt to study and coordinate Muslim Affairs, particularly in political matters, may prove unproductive since the OIC itself is handicapped by significant internal contradictions. The OIC purports to represent its members, but its members prefer to represent themselves; the OIC wishes to unify the *umma*, but the *umma* and the modern nation-state system have a difficult time coexisting. (Husain, 1995, p. 214)

While these two organizations are the most prominent of the transnational groups, other institutions do exist, but primarily on a sub-regional (i.e., the Gulf Cooperation Council, etc.) or ethnically-based groupings (the Arab League). These organizations also fail to meet the requirements for the necessary center to coordinate and control an "Islamic international." The truth is that solidarity along Islamic lines is symbolic at best, and the nation-state and related national interests have increasingly become the primary level of focus:

No common cultural identity binds the scores of Moslem nations which have vastly different histories. There are serious debates among Islamic theologians. Rivalry among Moslem leaders is fierce. In the post-1945 period, more Moslem countries have been at war with each other than with non-Moslem countries. Sectarian, ethnic and tribal conflicts . . . seem endless. . . . Even the Palestinians, with the most distinct single objective and target—a homeland—are divided into deadly factions. Iran, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia all claim the mantle of Islamic leadership but none has obtained it. The variety of Islamic movements under diverse internal conditions and different foreign sponsorships further attests to the absence of an "Islamic international," and the lack of a central command-and-control headquarters. . . . [R]ecent history dispels the notion of a mass movement. On the contrary,

tumultuous diversity describes what has happened. (Amuzegar, 1993, p. 129-130)

While not an exhaustive survey, this review of organizations, coupled with the prior discussion of the transitory basis of most previous ideologies, is at least sufficient to cast significant doubt as to the potential for the “clash of civilizations” deemed imminent by many leading scholars and analysts.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

With the end of the Cold War and the concurrent changes in the international security environment, political Islam has gained new significance as a potential threat to U.S. interests. Assessments have varied, ranging from an Islamic resurgence viewed as a global replacement for the communist ideological menace—or a harbinger of global state-sponsored terrorism and anti-Western Holy War—to that of a more legitimate expression of social and political activism, representing a competitive challenge potentially supportive of greater self-determination and democratization. In order to formulate a consistent and coherent long-term policy toward this resurgent ideological force, an objective assessment of Islamic fundamentalism must be developed to enable policy-makers to understand the true nature and aspirations of Islamists, and to craft the appropriate responses. This study began with a brief recounting of various exaggerated caricatures and threatening themes common to the popular literature on “Islamic fundamentalism,” and then asked: “What is the true nature of the phenomenon? How powerful is it? What are the potential threats?”

In contrast to a monolithic “Green Menace” or fears of civilizational-level conflict, analysis has shown that political Islam—while influenced by unifying aspects of a common Third World “crisis” environment and the standard symbology, history and ideas of the Islamic faith—is paradoxically a diverse grouping of ideologies that is polycentric in character. These ideologies vary in specific origins and emphasize a political focus aimed primarily at the local, intrastate levels. While some elements within this broad grouping are militant in their approach and antithetical to a peaceful resolution of regional problems, it is far from monolithic and contains other elements that are potentially supportive to endeavors to bring a strong, lasting peace to the region:

[Just] as Christianity is not a monolithic faith, Islamic revivalism is also not a homogenous movement. Radicalism cannot best represent the orientations of adherents to the Islamic faith. The United States must look at the diversity in Islam and reach for reformist forces that in the past have been in the

forefront of fighting authoritarianism and urging the establishment of democratic institutions. Only then can the United States find moderate reformers and democrats in the Muslim world and understand the fallacy of the claim that "Muslim countries have the most terrorists and the fewest democracies in the world." (Noorbasksh, 1993, p. 95)

This pervasive, yet polycentric character of political Islam—determined so significantly by local factors—leads to the realization that there is no one easy answer to questions of the power or the threats linked to it. What can be said is that the phenomenon, which "encapsulates" the multifaceted "identities" political Islam assumes throughout the Greater Middle East region, is based upon most underlying causes that generate the "crisis" environment where political Islam thrives. Since these conditions are pervasive throughout the region, and unlikely to disappear in the future, it is likely that political Islam is here to stay as well. The power and correlated threats from Islamist opposition groups is more a question of the combined strength of the movements versus potential weaknesses of the states themselves. Again, variety and diversity across the region are the norms, as certain states have developed plans to marginalize radical elements by working with or coopting moderate Islamist groups; others have resorted to the problematic methods of repression. Some regimes focus on the bigger picture, seeking to solve the fundamental problems, while others simply react to the latest Islamist activities.

With an understanding of this inherently localized nature of the phenomenon, the corresponding threats can be seen deriving from it as primarily twofold: the ever present potential for terrorist activity, sometimes with transnational aspects but mostly focused against the regime within the country in question; and a broader insurgent campaign aimed against the regime that gains populist support from an ideology of political Islam. While the threat from Islamic militants employing terrorism is probably the most likely threat, it is of a more "common" nature in terms of both the threat itself and required threat deterrence (i.e., anti-terrorism/counterterrorism measures) and also less significant in overall impact. Conversely, the more important danger, though less common and less likely is the possibility for Islamic fundamentalists to overthrow the government of an ally—such as Egypt or Saudi

Arabia—in the Middle East. This *significance-level* of the potential threat is the consideration when discussing “importance”: while terrorism does have an impact on international security—and U.S. security especially after the World Trade Center bombing—the gravity of situation potentially leading to “another Iran” makes Islamic fundamentalist-inspired insurgency a much more compelling concern. While beyond the scope of this thesis, analysis of U.S. and regional regime capabilities to counteract violence from sub-national groups—in the context of low-intensity conflict (LIC)—becomes a key feature in general threat projections. This constitutes yet another variable in the analysis of this complex threat.

At least one factor that adds to the “threatening” aspects of political Islam is the contradictory nature of a religion-based ideology when viewed from the perspective of Western theories of modernization. The seemingly paradoxical nature of a ‘revitalized’ religion assuming the role of a powerful social and political force in the modern era, when modernization was supposed to hail the rise of secularized ideologies and the decline of more traditional influences, is viewed with both wonder and fear. It is a phenomenon that is not limited strictly to the Middle East or to the religion of Islam:

Ideas about the separation of religion and politics were based upon the observation of the Western experience . . . secularization was expected to be a universal phenomenon that would be replicated in other areas of the world. Under the impact of modernization, conventional societal outlooks and organizations would be undermined and traditional religions would be shoved aside. . . . The 1970s and 1980s, however, have proven such expectations to be wrong. The political revitalization of religious groups in the United States, Latin America, the Middle East, and other areas of the Third World during these decades, seriously undermined many widely held assumptions about modernization. Urbanization, advancement in education, and occupational diversity, did not lead to the decline in the importance of religious values and the rejection of traditions. On the contrary, the social upheaval produced by modernization resulted in a renewed interest in traditional religions. (Sahliyah, 1990, pp. 3-4)

This variation in the accepted “norm” of modernization theory points to the need for change in the way the phenomenon—typically described as anti-Western, anti-modern, etc.—is viewed; a more specialized means to interpret the true nature of political Islam is required to overcome these stereotypical thought patterns when conducting analysis and permit an objective assessment. More discussion of this topic will follow in the next section.

In this study, an attempt to reach such a goal was undertaken by examining the paradoxical aspects of political Islam, its features of unity as well as diversity, and then combining these results to form conclusions. First, the commonalities of the phenomenon were discussed as a general overview to “set the stage” for further analysis. Briefly, political Islam is an example of a “native” response to the resultant “crises” of discontinuous development and secularization common to transitional societies of the Third World. As transitional regimes often lack the mobilization capacity or the legitimate capability to manage the myriad problems that besiege their societies, the appeal of ideologies based upon religio-political thought can garner widespread support in opposition to regime activities. However, these broad similarities should not be seen as the only aspects of concern. More important to this discussion, political Islam is a “localized” response to the common “crisis” atmosphere, a selected eclectic gathering of Third World and Islamic symbols adapted and oriented to the specific time and place involved. The paradoxical nature of the phenomenon continues when examining the variety of “adaptations” and conflicting tendencies that are so pervasive within it:

Islam, except for Qor’anic scriptures, is not a monolithic religion. Nor is it inherently belligerent, menacing, or a radical force for change. Along with the fundamental schism that exists between its two principal sects, . . . there are numerous warring factions within each sect. The scriptures themselves offer boundless room for interpretation . . . virtually guaranteeing the legitimacy of opposing policies and strategies. (Amuzegar, 1993, p. 129)

More important, when viewing political Islam as the latest in a series of ideologies that have swept through the region, additional “wisdom” can be found in comparisons with those that

preceded it. The high levels of religious-based rhetoric common to both regime and opposition today are simply the recycled populist speeches of previous ideologues of the developing world, wrapped in the Islamic garb of the primary ideology of opposition today:

[O]nce stripped of its Islamic symbolism, the Muslim revivalists' discourse regarding the Islamic world's relations with the West closely resembles that of the anticolonial nationalist and other Third World radical movements of the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s. In other words, it is not Islam as a religion or even as a political ideology that is the source of tension between the west and the Muslim revivalists. Viewed in this perspective, Western-Muslim conflict becomes far more amenable to resolution . . . (Hunter, p. xi, 1988)

Though armed with this insight, to take advantage of it in resolving some outstanding issues, analysis must accommodate the paradox of political Islam and incorporate components of the "big picture" environment along with the requisite specifics to achieve a comprehensive, differentiated basis of analysis. Other aspects—such as factors involving the broader Islamic revival, the correlation with the failures of a series of various preceding ideologies, the effect of regime policies on Islamists responses—all play variety of roles that must be incorporated.

Before moving to a proposed solution to the problems of analysis just described, it must be restated that the cumulative nature of the 'negatives' in the region—the burgeoning population, the scarcity of resources, the lack of education, mal-distribution of wealth, and general social, political and economic underdevelopment that plagues most countries—create conditions where greater and greater numbers of people are receptive to alternatives to the continued failure of their inept governments. Such deficiencies are likely to persist, as no comprehensive policies are being developed to deal with these compounding problems. These "causes" of Islamism are an important aspect of the analysis of the fundamentalism "symptoms" and, as will be discussed below, should be incorporated in any policy dealing with this phenomenon.

A. ISLAMIC DIALECTICS AS A TOOL FOR ANALYSIS

Based upon the complex, localized nature of political Islam, any attempts to develop a broader assessment of geographic regions, it then becomes necessary for an in-depth review of individual countries, which can then be sorted out by critical factors such as population, geo-strategic location, "ties" to the U.S. etc., to gain a greater sense of priorities. Once this more localized "target area" is developed, a more "in-depth" approach to analysis provides the start needed to eventually return to broader conclusions, if required. The proposal here is that the complexities of political Islam are related to dynamic aspects of several "multifaceted dialectical relationships" between Islam and the social, political, economic, and cultural dimensions of its environment. These correlations serve to both hinder *simple* definition or conceptualization of political Islam, but can also form the basis for greater understanding of the phenomenon as a whole. While the overall concept of these dialectics was developed by R. Hrair Dekmejian (1995, pp. 19-22) primarily as part of a simple illustration of diversity within the Islamic revival, by adding additional associations and then elaborating upon them, these dialectical relationships can be used to form more complex, probing "questions" needed to gain generalized answers to the questions above. The proposal here is that—with appropriate modifications included—these general associations can be "applied" to a particular level-of-analysis (such as the Greater Middle East or the Gulf States or Egypt) as a method to aid in making general determinations concerning political Islam and related threats. Each relationship is understood as interrelated and forming part of the greater whole; the cumulative results of a survey provide the "answers" sought. Again, given the enigmatic nature of the overall phenomenon, two aspects are particularly important when applying this methodology: first, to gain optimum advantage from this type of analysis, the survey must closely account for each of the contrasting factors of the dialectic when forming conclusions about an aspect of political Islam—to avoid inaccurate descriptions and implications; and second, improved "accuracy" comes with limiting the variables involved—by limiting the scope (geographic range) of the survey whenever possible—to minimize the variations inherent in the phenomenon. While

an imprecise process—especially in the context of region-wide assessment—this methodology will allow for the best possible analysis.

The primary dialectical relationships for analysis include:

- **Secularism vs. Islamism:** the central factor within the overall correlation, friction centers on the relationship between Islam and politics within society; proponents of the secular state, including the Muslim Pragmatists, are influenced by Western theory/concepts of modernization. They are opposed by the Islamists and Muslim Modernists, who seek to establish an “Islamic” state, with a variety of specific interpretations.

This is a central “debate” within Muslim society, which feels the effects of a series of failures by succeeding secular ideologies and the harsh impact of modernization/Westernization on the indigenous culture and social structure. Given the problematic issue concerning the separation of “church” and state within Islam, concerns over this relationship are likely to always be a factor within Muslim political spheres to some degree. The outcome of the “conflict” is influenced by environmental conditions and the personalities involved, their values and ideologies/methods for approaching the problem (revolutionary, conservative, etc.). Since ruling elites “control” the sphere of political debate in almost every regional society, this conflict will likely take less “open” forms than might have in a different structural environment for politics. Unless regimes decide to broaden political discourse, or are forced—typically out of a position of weakness—to institute some form of Islamic reforms within society to build legitimacy, the evidence of “strength” on each side will be more concealed.

- **Ruling Elites vs. Islamist Ideologues:** the leaders of the two “sides” in the struggle involving political Islam; the elites, by definition, will promote an ideology which supports the status quo. Appeals to Islam will be “sanctioned” by coopted members of the *ulama*. The Islamists have the “favored” position of the opposition, and base their ideological strategy for change on an eclectic reading/interpretation of the fundamentals of Islam.

The critical factor here is the level of legitimacy among the masses that either side can generate/maintain in the face of “attacks” by the other. Can the regime use symbolic or economic assets to aid in its mobilization efforts or must it rely on coercive means to enforce compliance? Also involved is the relative success of the opposing ideologies—does the regime produce results and improve the citizenry’s lives, or does the “Islamic” solution have broader appeal based upon the failures of the dominant ideology? Is the dominant ideology deemed “authentic” and understood by the majority of the people?

- **Theology vs. Ideology:** the relationship between Islam the religion and Islam the political ideology is a key factor in differentiating the phenomenon from the broader aspects of the Islamic revival. While general aspects of religiosity are higher across the region, the necessary focus must be on the political agenda of the Islamist groups to distinguish pertinent aspects/levels of support.

With an understanding of political Islam as an ideology, the concept clarifies the primary reason behind the diversity of the phenomenon: the inherent flexibility of the symbols and other attributes of the religion which can be interpreted in a variety of ways and applied to various aspects of any issue of concern. Religion is a key component of the basic cultural makeup of a society and forms the basis for potentially broad-based appeal. This powerful combination’s potential threat stems from the fact that, in the words of James Piscatori, “the answers hinge on what one hopes to find.” The various factors, such as generational change, crises, etc., which contribute to the “transitory” nature of ideologies in general must be kept in mind, along with the related shifts in reformist-revolutionary or conservative-“ness” that occurs when the power relationships of ideologies change. Distinctions must be made between evidence of increased religiosity and politically-oriented activity.

- **Islamic Modernism vs. Islamic Conservatism:** conflict between two sides of the debate, with Modernists seeking to adapt or reform Islam in order to apply it to the modern context, while the conservative Traditionalists reject foreign influence of any kind and support traditional interpretation of Islamic precepts and their roles in society.

Analysis of this debate goes far in determining the level of sophistication required by the society in question for its dominant ideology. While the Modernists often have a difficult time defending some aspects of their reforms, their overall effect can be positive for development if their positions are couched in forms with broader appeal. Their ability to translate Islam into a relevant ideology for today's environment is crucial to the viewpoints of the elites and eventually the masses within a society. Otherwise, the traditional *ulama* and the Islamists will garner the central positions in the societal debate, marginalizing their often mutual foes, the Modernists.

- **Establishment Islam vs. Populist Islamism:** the traditional *ulama*, typically supporting the established order and a conservative brand of Islam, versus the Islamist opposition, promoting a more revolutionary strategy of socio-political action.

This is the crucial arena that determines such factors as the legitimacy of the ruling elites and the potential for mass mobilization on religious grounds versus the regime. If the *ulama* continues to support the status quo, thus lending at least some religious credibility to ruling elites, then the opposition is unlikely to gain mass support in any but the most unique circumstances.

While this is a brief list of some of the key dialectical relationships, it provides some insight into an area that appears promising for the development of a better means of analysis for this complex problem. Further research and refinement is required, but the general thrust can be seen as getting closer to a "true" assessment of the phenomenon. By taking such a comprehensive and individualized estimate, much of the potential for misunderstanding due to variations in the aspects noted above will be greatly reduced.

B. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

Based upon the nature of the phenomenon and the lingering "crisis" environment, both political Islam and the broader Islamic revival will likely be a long-term challenge within the Greater Middle East region. As such, given the radically changed environment

of the post-Cold War world and the resultant freedom of maneuver provided to the United States, U.S. policy makers seeking to “deal with” political Islam must take the overall atmosphere surrounding the phenomenon into account and focus on the long-term aspects of its sources/origins. The question then becomes, is the goal to try to solve the problem/minimize the threat from political Islam, or simply to safeguard our interests in as easy a way possible and “keep our powder dry” for the eventual fights that come? If, in fact, U.S. policymakers sought to take full advantage of the new geo-strategic environment and seek to resolve some of the fundamental sources of unrest and violence, there are several factors that would figure prominently in the success of such an effort.

First, a generally more “comprehensive” foreign policy than typically pursued must be developed and *implemented*—this is a key concern everywhere, not just for the Islamic world! The piecemeal activities typically employed hurt our credibility with both friends and potential enemies, as contradictory signals and ambiguous stances are given out when a firm “line in the sand” is required. An appropriate example comes from the U.S./Western powers stance on the early years of the recent fighting in the former Yugoslavia. While Western analysts and policy makers paid little heed to the broader impact of their (in)action, the Muslim world was aware—and perceived a familiar “double-standard” in the West’s (especially the U.S.’s) interaction with Muslim communities across the globe:

Newspaper editorials across the breadth of the [Middle East] region, have railed at the contrast between the action taken in Iraq and not taken in Bosnia. Not just across the region either, nor even just in the Arab world. As far afield as Bangladesh, even Indonesia, Islamic groups have taken the affair as a stick with which to beat the United States and—which in time may matter more—their own governments. (“America v Islam,” *The Economist*, July 3, 1993)

This is but one example of the need to incorporate a more comprehensive approach to foreign policy—for if U.S. inactivity in a place like Bosnia were somehow to spark cycles of increased violence elsewhere as part of local protest efforts, U.S. interests could be even

further damaged, beyond the already obvious loss of stature by not showing consistency in our stance on aggression worldwide.

In addition, a comprehensive policy would also unify the "thrust" behind various sub-policies of the overall U.S. foreign policy effort to avoid contradictions and ensure they are executed in a balanced manner. Obviously, promoting the values that America stands for is an important part of this effort, but we must realize that policy statements should apply universally—i.e., democracy should be good enough for both countries of the former Soviet Bloc and Middle Easterners such as the Algerians, aggression in the Bosnias of the world is just as intolerable as aggression in oil-rich Kuwait, etc. A common sense approach, yes, but a culturally-sensitive one as well. However, policymakers must remain aware that issues such as democracy and human rights can be a "double-edged sword," and be cognizant of the potential backlash effect of certain policies such as "enlargement." Modernization has come quickly to most of the Greater Middle East, and we must realize the benefits of a slower pace—with "measurable" progress geared to its unique socio-cultural environment. The transitional countries of the region are still quite new to the "state making" effort when compared with their European/development model counterparts.

Also, in a related point, U.S. policies must seek to confront the root "causes" (the crisis environment) as well as extremist "symptoms" (the radical Islamists' activities) when dealing with the problems associated with political Islam. This might seem like an idealist position, but in point of fact it is the only *solution* to the potential threat from political Islam. While an absolute removal of the variety of ailments afflicting the Muslim world—and the Third World in general—would be a utopian goal, attempts should at least be made at international-level cooperation toward that end. Even limited progress will be rewarded, as long as the *perception* of a genuine effort being made is maintained. With that in mind, the limitations of both our capabilities and the general environment itself must be recognized, along with the overall consequences of any efforts we make. The historical baggage the West brings with its aid and best intentions in the region is not easily lost. Moreover, the U.S. has not been very good at maintaining a low profile in our activities in the past.

However, sensitivity to the overall situation and a sophisticated foreign policy effort can produce great benefits for the U.S. now and into the future.

In addition to the more fundamental approach to a strategy of action versus potential threats from political Islam, U.S. policy must distinguish between the religion of Islam and the varieties of Islamic ideologies—Islam is not the “problem,” extremist ideologies (and, more importantly, actions) are. Over the past five years successive Administrations have made a point of *saying* that Islam as a religion is not the threat of concern. However, since actions and *perceptions* (again) speak louder than words, careful effort must be made to consider all sides of a proposed policy—it becomes more of an issue of cultural sensitivity and an attempt at empathizing with Muslims across the globe.

As a separate part of this effort, contrast must be made between the ideology and rhetoric (“words”) of the Islamists and potential intolerable *actions* that they might take—we should “draw the line” in advance where we differentiate between what is acceptable behavior and what is not. Terrorist activities must be forcefully dealt with, and the U.S. response to actions taken against our personnel or interests in the region must be seen as appropriate, measured, and “expected.” However, moderation in our overall policies will avoid the danger of creating “self-fulfilling prophecies,” as has happened often in the past when dealing with this region. Once boundaries have been drawn and intolerable activities outlined, retaliation or repression should be concentrated on those groups or actions which really pose a threat. This goes for both the U.S. and regimes across the developing, including the Muslim, world in general—the goal must be to not create a bigger problem by radicalizing a majority of the population in reaction to the unacceptable behavior of an otherwise smaller minority group. As the phenomenon can be seen as a long-term factor in the region, tactful policies of inclusion and cooperation with its moderate elements, while demanding and enforcing appropriate conduct from its more radical fringe, are a difficult but necessary first step.

Most important, attempts must be made not only to ensure U.S. actions or statements are not be seen as anti-Islam—that will be a no-win situation against the fastest growing

religion in the world—but also to take into account the “Third World” aspects of the phenomenon of concern. Fighting political Islam is not the answer; the real answer is to fight—and it will be a hard one, for sure—the conditions spawning the more radical ideologies of the phenomenon across the various dimensions noted. This comprehensive goal, with direct linkage to the North-South dispute, could have major benefits in areas well beyond the immediate concerns of the Greater Middle East and political Islam.

The problem with being the sole “super power” is that everyone is attentive to the slightest U.S. activity, because even the least amount of effort can have a relatively great effect. When putting a concerted effort behind an undertaking, the U.S. has developed a considerable reputation of effectiveness and success. Our current foreign policy focus on enlargement and engagement appears to reflect the “best” that America has to offer the rest of the world, leading to conditions of mutual benefits to all. However, given the U.S. stance on related developments in the Greater Middle East, our strategy of “Dual Containment” seems to portray more accurately the U.S. “vision” for the region. Instead of approaching foreign policy in an honest and straightforward, undifferentiated manner across regions and cultures, the U.S. has often seemed to “segregate” our principles, leaving the appearance of a “double-standard” in which the U.S. supports popular reform elsewhere but works to maintain the established order in the other lesser-developed regions like the Middle East.

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